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## Views and Opinions.

### Education and the Citizen.

SOME years ago I remember being at an educational conference, when one of the speakers—I think it was Dr. Clifford—said it was the duty of the State schools to turn out good citizens. Much to the surprise of many I objected. I did so because the generalization struck me as being one of those plausible, but quite vicious statements which capture the allegiance of many, because each one attaches to it a different meaning. If we were dealing with schools, each of which was run on independent lines, with characteristics and ideals of its own, the statement might be permitted to pass, because the differences of method would correct or supplement each other, competing ideals would arise, and room would be left for initiative and independence. But at this conference we were dealing with State schools, and in the future State schools, or schools that are under State control, look like being the only kind of school which need concern anyone. One certainly cannot expect those stupidly inefficient and typically British institutions advertised as a "School for the sons (or daughters) of gentlemen" to survive for very much longer. Bad parents will not bother about them, and even "good" ones will not continue to sacrifice the mentality of their offspring to their desire to turn out their children as pale copies of the "upper classes." One day even the patrons of these private establishments may awaken to the superiority of a good education to the very thin social polish applied by inefficient instructors.

### Men v. Automaton.

What does the State understand by a good citizen? Was Oliver Cromwell a good citizen? Was Thomas Paine a good citizen? Was Carlyle, or Bradlaugh, or Mrs. Pankhurst, or anyone of a score of other men or women, the names of whom will readily occur to anyone, good citizens? On the contrary, to the contemporary State they were anything but that. Nay, even now that the names of this class of persons are held in

some sort of respect, I question whether a State teacher who constantly held them up as ideal characters would not get into serious trouble. For what the State understands by a good citizen is not the man who, on some question of principle, refuses to pay a tax, or deliberately breaks a law which he believes to be an unjust law, who is always agitating against something that is established, or agitating to get something established, but one who does just as he is told, pays his rates and taxes with unfailing regularity, stands up to "God save the King," with a patently bored attitude, tells his children that it is their duty to obey the powers that be, and never, never mixes with wicked agitators. In the eyes of the powers that be, the good citizen is one who never gives any trouble. The bad citizen is the one who is apt to make himself a nuisance directly he sees anything with which he disagrees, or which he thinks ought to be altered. It is true that history is apt to reverse the valuation, but by that time both the good and the bad citizen are dead, and the living ones, but very seldom properly appreciate the lesson of their existence.

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### Standardizing Education.

I was led to these observations because I saw that Mussolini had been treating his followers to a dose of the "Good citizen" medicine in education. Addressing the Senate he said:—

Those who maintained that the teaching of the children was a matter solely for the family were saying something inconsistent with the realities of modern life. The modern family, engaged unceasingly in the struggle for daily bread, could not teach anyone.

Only the State, with its facilities of every description, could undertake the task.

The State alone could give the requisite religious instruction, supplementing it with the whole of the other disciplinary measures.

What then was the education which they claimed? It was the education of the citizen.

I do not for a moment maintain that the teaching of children is wholly a matter for the family, although I do not see how the parents are to be kept out, unless we set up an ideal of the parents as mere breeding machines, having no more to do with the products of their breeding than a hen has with the eggs marked one and sixpence a dozen in a grocer's window. Recent years have taught us that in even the exact sciences it is unwise to standardize teaching over much, and the same lesson comes with a thousand-fold strength when we are dealing with such things as history, morals, and the rest of the subjects that go to make up the curriculum of anything above an infant school. That the State must undertake some supervision over the education of the children of the nation seems clear, but it is also clear that, if the education is to be as effective as possible, we have to

beware of the over standardization of instruction. Seven or eight millions of the younger members of a nation all repeating the same things, and holding substantially the same views is not a prospect that would fascinate anyone save Mussolini, Joynson-Hicks, or a leader of the Russian Soviet.

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#### The Aim of Education.

It is to the interests of *Society* that everyone should be well educated, it is to the interests of a *government* that young people should grow up like so many gramophones grinding out the same tunes when a button is pressed or a handle is turned. When, therefore, Signor Mussolini says that only the State can undertake the work of education, give the " requisite religious instruction " and " other disciplinary measures," in order to effect the " education of the citizen," it is evident that, first, by the State he means the existing government, and second, that we are up against the notion that the work of the schools is to produce the " good citizen," who, when he is produced, is certainly not worth the trouble of preserving. One of the counts against religious teaching is that it is unintelligent, uninspiring, and unilluminating. It is that because it is a standardized teaching; everyone is taught the same thing in the same way, and repeats it in the same way. A standardized teaching, whether in the school or in the Church, has pretty much the same effect. To-day we are feeling some of the after-effects of the standardization of news and articles that was in vogue during the war period in this and in other countries. The mass, always quickly responsive to " slogans " of any kind, became more than ever responsive when pulpit and press joined with the government in placing uniform and ready-made sentiments before it. It was not so much that opposing opinions were deprecated—although, for the first time in the modern history of this country, criticism of the government was legally repressed—the noticeable thing was that hardly anyone tolerated opposition. The press and the pulpit became one gigantic gramophone, using only one authorized record. Mussolini's ambition of a State machinery that should turn out nothing but " good citizens " was fully realized. And for over ten years we have been paying the cost of its realization.

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#### The Press and the Public.

The question of whether the standard of intelligence is higher to-day than it was a century ago is one that is often asked. For my own part, I do not think it is higher or lower, but what one may call the area of operative intelligence is wider than it was. Everybody can read, everyone does read, but what they read opens up a rather important question. The multiplicity of papers is no evidence of a greater intelligence, but only indicative of there being a larger field for commercial exploitation—a field which men of the type of the late Lord Northcliffe—were quick to appreciate. Newspapers and journals of the scrappy, tit-bit order make up almost the entire mental food of the vast majority of people to-day, and anything more unsatisfactory in result it would be difficult to imagine. With rare exceptions the daily papers have discovered that if they are to have huge circulations they must avoid inflicting the least mental strain on their readers, and must pander to sensationalism in its poorest form. Column after column is devoted to the death of a banker, or the poisoning of a wife, with interviews with the man who supplied them with milk, or coals, and pictures of the man next door, who last saw the dead person. Journalists of the James Douglas type compete with the clergy for supremacy in platitudinous exercises in

meaningless morality. The illness of a Derby favourite is given more space—with illustrations—than the death of a famous statesman or a great scientist. Before the era of cheap papers and popular journals, the man who desired to know had no other source of information than reading a book. Nowadays he gets it served up to him in tabloid form, with the result that he never even discovers how very little he knows, or how much there is to learn. We are living in an era of the half-educated, the half-understood, the half-developed. There are any amount of prejudices about, but very few opinions. As Landor would have said, a thousand echoes to every single voice. And what the world needs is voices, not echoes.

Variety in education was never so necessary as it is to-day. This is an era of investigation, of discovery, of general restlessness, and of political experimentation. More than ever the quality of mental independence is needed. The desire to turn out " good citizens " is on all fours with the desire of the Church to turn out good Christians—it means creating a number of automatons reacting in an identical manner to identical stimuli. That is an ideal which appeals strongly to the religious type of mind, whether that type be associated with a Church or with politics. But the great need of to-day is not so much " good " citizens, as thinking citizens, informed and educated citizens. If our education can produce these, we can safely trust the genuinely good citizen to emerge where and when he will.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

### In the Name of the Prophet— Lies.

" In religion,  
What damned error, but some sober brow  
Will bless it and approve it with a text."

Shakespeare.

" Learning is good, but common sense is better."

G. W. Foote.

THOMAS CARLYLE, probably prompted by an unusually severe attack of dyspepsia, once described man as a " two-forked radish." The term was more critical than accurate, and it would not have won the unqualified approval of Darwin, or even of Haeckel. Yet Carlyle erred in most distinguished company, for if the three-headed Christian deity, who, it is alleged, inspired, or wrote the Bible of that religion, could not recollect such a simple fact as that the whale is not a fish, although he is supposed to have made countless millions of them, there is every excuse for the irascible sage of Chelsea.

Curiously, the writers of the Christian Bible were most inaccurate, and were as careless of facts as politicians and policemen. They frankly contradicted each other, and, when bankrupt of ideas, simply copied a passage written elsewhere in the same book and filled the vacancy. Not only were they most artistic and fluent liars, but their crowning glory was their knowledge of natural history, which was peculiar and extensive. Their mathematics would disgrace lower-class schoolboys, their history was almost entirely imaginative, but their excursions into zoology were nearly too funny for words.

Wordsworth has told us, in austere language, that " Nature never did betray the heart that loved her." And this reminds us of the most astonishing discrepancy between the conclusions of earnest students of nature and the Oriental humourists who gave us the Christian Bible. The consideration of this difference affords us material for a few comments free from that acrimony so often imported into the writings of mere theologians.

In natural history not the veriest tyro, the most myopic bungler, would confound the hare with the ruminants. Yet, kind-hearted clergymen would have us believe that the creator of Linnæus blundered concerning the hare chewing the cud, and bid us note that the maker of Cuvier wrote nonsense regarding clean beasts and dirty beasts. As a fact, it was actually reserved for mere worms of the dust, such as Buffon, Lamarck, and Darwin, to clean out the Augean stable of the divine ignorance, and to create the science anew.

Æsop and Bidpai, Phædrus and La Fontaine have assured us that everything talks from a lodging-house flea to a hairdresser. Even the taciturn tape-worm unfolds itself when in liquor. From their animated descriptions there appears to be an international esperanto. Surely the Oriental writers of the Christian Bible could have effected the capture of the various animals as simply as sparrows are captured by salting their tails. A few minutes' private conversation would then have verified the accuracy, or otherwise, of their sacred record, and thus saved generations of commentators much ink, more headaches, and still more bad language.

"Wild beasts used once to roam through old England, but now very wild beasts are only found in theological gardens," wrote a very juvenile scribe on an examination paper. And "very wild beasts" are to be found in the Christian Bible. Where else can you find a talking snake, a lodging-house whale, or a pigeon co-respondent? Where else are the fiery serpents, the dragons, the cockatrice, and the worm that never dies? Where, other than in this sacred zoo, are the bedevilled pigs, the four-legged fowls, the unicorn, the cherubim, the ventriloquial donkey of Balaam, and the mad menagerie of the Apocalypse?

Even the alleged "human beings" in the Christian Bible act most strangely. Adam and Eve start life at full age. The lives of the patriarchs ran into centuries, and some fortunate persons had two funerals apiece. Some were so magnificently developed that ordinary folks looked like grasshoppers beside them. Among such a chamber of horrors it is remarkable that cats are nowhere mentioned. Maybe, the third person of the Undivided Trinity, the sacred dove, had an objection to that animal. If cats are absent, the Bible menagerie can boast of horses of fire which carried Elijah to heaven. There is also Aaron's rod that turns into a serpent and swallows other snakes. And what is to be said of the kind-hearted raven which brought sandwiches to the prophet Elijah? The Bible menagerie is unique, there is nothing like it on earth.

These nonsensical ideas emanate from the Christian Bible, and of all the strange frantic and incomprehensible books which have issued from the brains of theologians, this volume is one of the most remarkable. And the work which Freethinkers have set themselves is that of freeing their fellows from the absurdities and barbarities of pre-scientific times, which are perpetuated by this fetish-book. To class the Christian Bible as a book of ordered knowledge is the last word in absurdity. It is a salmagundi of riotous, exuberant, Oriental imagination, similar to the Arabian Nights. It is important because it is regarded as a fetish-book. It is stamped as God's Word by Act of Parliament. It is forced, with all its absurdities and barbarities, into the hands of children at schools. It is used as a fetish for swearing upon in Courts of Law. And, if all the rubbish were eliminated, it would be unrecognisable. It would be like meeting one's favourite dog in the form of a sausage.

MIMNERMUS.

## Bogey! Bogey!

LET me whisper—if I may again confess something which ought to be rank heresy—that I rather like vamps. Yes, I do indeed. A vamp is a fascinating personality as a rule. She is a woman of experience, knows what she wants and has a darned hard try to get it. She has courage, initiative, loves men, is good-looking, has wit and character. I do not admit for a moment that I have had much experience with them myself, but I do know them on the screen, and I shamelessly insist that I am fascinated. Blood-suckers, indeed! Don't you believe it. They are fine women, bless 'em, and the word vamp suits them beautifully. It has the right ring about it, and I envy the man lucky enough to get a genuine vamp for wife. He has a treasure.

I wish this article had to be all about them, but unfortunately, I have to deal with *real* vampires this time. The genuine blood-suckers, that is. The dreadful beings who lie in the graves all day, come out of them at night and delight in biting somebody's neck, so as to be able to draw out all the blood from the victim's body. How they love this gory game! How they gloat over it! And please do not forget there have been vampires through the ages, and there are vampires now—just as there were witches in the past, and they exist even to this day as the Book of Books often says.

You do not believe it? Come, come, that is the fault of being a blatant Atheist or a crass Materialist. Have just a little faith, e'en as a grain of sand and you might—I say might—believe anything. The faith that can move mountains would not kick at a teeny, weeny thing like a vampire or a witch. Don't be so incredulous, don't deny the great mass of authenticated testimony collected by the Church—the Church, of course.

Some of you will remember, perhaps, the Rev. Montague Summers's *History of Witchcraft*, published a year or two back. Mr. Summers, as well becomes a servant of the Roman Catholic sect of Christianity, believes entirely in the supernatural. I should have great difficulty in putting any limit to his belief. All the miracles recorded by the Church he swallows as easily as I do ice cream. I doubt if there is a single one he is not positive about. The way he can throw them off in his books commands my unfeigned admiration. The sillier they are, the more he believes them, and that is as it should be. I simply can't stand the priest who is, so to speak, half and half or a quarter believer and three quarters unbeliever. Give me the man who says he believes in a real hell or purgatory, a real virgin birth, or son of God, a real Jonah swallowed by a real whale, or an actual Elijah going up in a bran new up-to-date fiery chariot. I have no room for the Christian who assures me that I make a hell for myself or we are all sons of God, and that I will find, if I search for it, a beautiful allegory in the story of Lot's wife. Mr. Summers belongs to the Universal Church—a Church that never changes, that is to-day exactly as it was in the Saviour's day—at least so he believes, and he is a mighty upholder of everything the Church has stood for, including witches and vampires. In his latest book, *The Vampire, his Kith and Kin*, Mr. Summers goes very deeply into his subject, and let me give credit where credit is due, it is perhaps the best all-round book on the subject so far printed. Indeed, if the author has read all the books he quotes, including the very full bibliography given at end of the work, he quite possibly has read everything ever written on vampires. One thing emerges pretty clearly however. His great reading has certainly

made him a whole-hearted believer in their existence. His exact words are, "it will be seen that the superstition and tradition of the Vampire prevail to an extraordinary extent, and it is hard to believe that a phenomenon which has had so complete a hold over nations, both old and young, in all parts of the world, at all times of history, has not some underlying and terrible truth, however rare this may be, in its more remarkable manifestations." And again, "Consciously or unconsciously it is realized that the vampire tradition contains far more truth than the ordinary individual cares to appreciate or acknowledge." And Mr. Summers finally quotes (in French), "The fable of the vampire is perhaps the most universal of our superstitions . . . It has everywhere the authority of tradition, and has also the authority of both philosophy and medicine. Even theology has had to discuss it." So that's that. There is truth behind the vampire, and through 350 pages, Mr. Summers does his best to convince you of it. Well, if you are interested in the horrible, the macabre, in malignant spirits, and the darkest of ghostly happenings, this is the book for you. Here is an example of what Mr. Summers writes about or quotes:—

Listen to the account of the *Penanggalan*. It was originally a woman. She used the magic arts of a devil in whom she believed, and she devoted herself to his service night and day, until the period of her agreement with her teacher had expired, and she was able to fly. Her head and neck were then loosened from the body, the intestines being attached to them, and hanging down in strings. The body remained where it was. Wherever the person whom it wished to injure happened to live, thither flew the head and bowels to suck his blood, and the person whose blood was sucked was sure to die . . . The *penanggalan* likes to suck the blood of women in child-birth . . . It is said that a *penanggalan* once came to a man's home in the middle of the night to suck his blood, and her intestines were caught in some thorns near the hedge, and she had to remain there until daylight, when the people saw and killed her.

Lovely, isn't it? True, do you ask? My dear sir, every word is 'Truth with a capital T'. There simply *must* be a genuine tradition behind the account.

But the work is packed with stories of vampires drawn from all sorts and conditions of books. The accounts from the Church—the Church—fill page upon page although it is true some of these accounts seem rather hopelessly confused with stories of holy saints, male and female. Then again, when Mr. Summers quotes the Bible he loves giving us the Latin translation as if Latin was an afterthought of God Almighty, who first spoke to His people in genuine Hebrew, then in New Testament Greek, and finally in the Church's own special tongue, Latin. Perhaps He has been summoned to the altar so many times in so many Churches during the past 2,000 years to the accompaniment of magic Latin words, that He has been persuaded now it really is His tongue.

I should dearly like to quote more stores of the dreadful Vampire, but space forbids. But I cannot refrain from letting you into the secret of the antidote. First of all, all Holy relics, the bones of saints, or a bit of the genuine Cross will make a vampire howl like mad and run away faster than any crook motor-car. They simply can't stand quotations from the Holy book, or even the solitary name of Jesus, if you can say it quickly enough and solemnly enough. The Cross is also a specific. But, says Mr. Summers, "it is certain that an effectual remedy against the vampire is to transfix his heart with a stake driven through with one single blow, to strike off his head with a sexton's spade, and perhaps best of all, to

burn him to ashes and purge the earth of his pollutions by the incineration of fire." This is the method I also personally recommend as some of us are not lucky enough to have a small piece of the genuine Cross beside us, they have mostly been taken up by believers.

If I dare, on such an important subject, leave the realm of fact and turn to fancy, I can sincerely commend Mr. Summers' chapter on the *Vampire in Literature*. He calls to notice quite a number of very interesting works of fiction, some of which are almost forgotten, and they don't deserve to be. To rescue them from oblivion is—and I mean this—far more meritorious than to try and perpetuate such a hopeless piece of credulous bunkum as the vampire. And once again I must call attention to the Church as responsible for such gross and kindred superstitions. Whether more and more people are flocking to her and her outworn beliefs is perhaps debateable. But one can record, with a sigh of relief, that as education spreads and credulity diminishes, vampires and witches, ghosts and goblins, demons and devils, spooks and spirits must disappear with the other nonsense which surrounds almost every religion man has made upon this earth.

H. CUTNER.

## The Tactics of the Modern Sophist.

(Continued from page 341.)

3. THE ancient device of "*Suppressio veri et suggestio falsi*," is as often resorted to now as ever. Not merely relevant facts are suppressed and kept out of sight, but those that are inseparable as integral factors and cardinal to subject under discussion. I will illustrate this tactic by means of two examples. In his treatment of mind, Mr. Joad confines himself to the human mind. The animal mind, the mind that Nature evolved as a *necessity* in the oceanic life in the sub-human and pre-human worlds, is wholly suppressed as if it did not exist at all, or was of no importance to the matter in hand. Whereas, it is the only mind that can impart to us a knowledge of its nature and meaning. There we can learn the necessity that brought it into being, and the system in alliance with which it was evolved. The human mind is a complex; it is twofold. It has the animal mind as a basic layer; but self-consciousness has superimposed upon this basis an artificial mind. It has duplicated the services of the higher senses as well as the function of mind as whole. Man has made the senses the handmaids of the self-conscious intellect in addition to the way they serve life in the animal world, with the result that mind as a whole has a new function—*viz.*, to find out what forces exist in Nature, and under what conditions they act with a view to subduing, bridling, and harnessing them to do our work—in short, this mind seeks to enslave Nature, living and lifeless, to toil for us.

As this super-added mind consist of awareness of relations (ideas) embodied in words as receptacles which give them an individuality more or less permanent, I propose to denote it as man's "verbal-ideal" mind. And for short, I may occasionally call it the "verbal-mind."

The metaphysician has invariably tried to divine the meaning and nature of mind in this verbal-ideal one. The animal mind, the basis of it all, is treated as non-existent; just as if a person sought to understand how the top storey of a building was held in position without taking into consideration the existence of the bottom storey! The lucubrations of the

Metaphysicians are not one whit less fantastic. The futility of the attempt is fully recorded in the comic history of metaphysics. Our learned professor of today is not one jot nearer to a solution than when Plato first blew his bubble over 2,000 years ago. That is precisely what metaphysicians have been doing ever since. Each new "savant" first pricks the bubble of his predecessors, which he does with astounding ease; and then immediately he proceeds to blow another to meet the same fate when his successor comes along. And it will be so to the end of time; and the last will be exactly where the first one was—at zero point. The bubbles often displayed a degree of iridescence according to the tenuity of their walls, *i.e.*, to the non-significance of the language in which it was set. Mr. Joad's effort is about the most reprehensible of the lot; he abuses language so audaciously as to make his deliverances provocative in the extreme.

Only reflection is necessary to reveal the fact that mind, the natural mind of man and beast, was evolved simultaneously and conjointly with the muscular system with which it is so intimately integrated as to form in reality one mental-muscular system. It was a combination that made life possible to a creature that was separated by intervals of space from food, foe, and opposite sex. And nothing is more palpably obvious than that Nature during her evolutionary trials and experiments throughout this æonic time evolved the brain to act as the organ of mind, just as it evolved the muscle to act as the organ of motility. The muscular system displays the same order of astoundingly marvellous schemes, devices, and correlated adjustments to effect movement, as the brain does to awaken sensation and mental impulse; only we can follow the mechanical devices better than we can the psychic scheme. The evidence is too overwhelming to leave a shadow of a doubt that the mind is the function of the brain. But should we quit the plane of animal life and soar into the verbal-ideal realm on metaphysical wings, we lost complete sight of the mind's nature and meaning. Hence the sophistry of the usual treatment.

The second example of keeping an integral factor wholly out of sight is found in his emphatic deliverance, on page fourteen, to wit: "The conclusion is that the world we know is in a very real sense mind-created." Mr. Joad is extremely fond of using the word "create." Is it because it lends itself readily to suggest the false? No one could ever infer or guess from this pronouncement, that animals are in possession of a system of sense-organs. That basic and integral factor in our cognizance of the phenomenal universe is not even adumbrated in this brave bit of ipse-dixitism, as if it did not exist, or at all events, that it had no bearing on the startling Eureka, that "the world we know is mind-created."

One is led to think that the sense-organs play no part in this world phenomenon. It is the "mind" that does all! It is therefore the source of all energy which must be of the nature of magic, and its flow is obviously *outwards*. He modifies the above declaration as follows: "Something, no doubt, is given from outside, but it is little more than a clean slate for our minds to work on, and the writing we discern is what we ourselves have put there."

There is another suppressed fact in the above "conclusion" beside the possession of sense-organs. No mention is made of physical energy as if there were no such thing; or at all events that it had nothing to do with the phenomenal world which he declares to be "mind-created." What is outside the mind is only a "something."

Thus the system of sense-organs with which every animal is endowed, and physical energy with which

the universe is saturated—the very two factors that are alone concerned in producing in the mind a psychic map of the world we live in—are both left wholly out of sight.

Was there ever a more glaring instance of a *suppressio verbi* and a *suggestio falsi*?

Let the reader just reflect. The sun which is the controlling centre of our system and the source of all forms of energy on this planet, and which energizes every activity, living and lifeless, thereon, is only a "something"!

Again, Nature slowly evolved through æons of time a most intricate set of sense-organs, consisting of the most marvellous devices for the express purpose of absorbing small amounts of either vibratory or radiant energy; and of transmitting it to the receiving organ—the brain—where it is translated into a sensation or psychic image. This receiving set—the cerebral system—displays three distinct functions—*viz.*, absorbing, transmitting, and translating. It is probably Nature's premier miracle in the realm of living things. It is certainly the most incomprehensible, not because it surpasses the muscular or digestive systems in the display of ingenious devices to achieve an end, but because there is a transition . . . to the psychic. There is a transition *en route* from the psychical to the psychic.

What an infinitude of experimentation Nature could have saved if it only knew that mind could effect all this without sense-organ or energy—poor blind Nature!

No one has ever stressed the fact that knowledge is wholly and essentially a psychic affair more often, or more emphatically than myself.

That we can never know anything of matter, except in terms of some sensation it can awaken in us—no, not even were it possible for us to have a hundred senses instead of seven. Knowledge is essentially mental.

It is therefore obvious that the secondary qualities—colour, sound, smell, heat, etc.—are nothing but awakened sensations. They are the psychic responses of the brain under the stimulus of the incoming stream of energy.

The colour of the rose is the mental response to the continuous wave of radiant energy emitted or reflected by the object. To call this "mind-created," or that they "are arranged by the mind into certain definite patterns," is a sophistic abuse of language in the effort to propagate a falsity.

The pattern of a rose, a fern, or a tree is *not* determined by the mind, but is an intrinsic attribute of the object itself. It is not the mind that makes a poplar tree so different in shape from that of the oak. It is Nature through its evolutionary trials that is responsible for the pattern of each and all. Moreover, it is Nature that is responsible for even the colour of the rose. Its colour is that portion of the sun beam falling upon it, that is *not absorbed by it*. And the same is true of every object, that is not self-luminous.

It was Nature that decided that the rose should be red, that the grass should be green, and the violet blue, etc. The particular colour sensation is simply the mental response to the particular wave length which Nature has during her æonic evolutionary experiments found best for the object not to absorb.

What a traversery of truth are such terms as "mind-created"; "clean slate"; "definite patterns arranged by mind"!

KERIDON.

(To be continued.)

The only medicine for suffering, crime, and all the other woes of mankind is wisdom.—Prof. T. H. Huxley.

## The World of Freethought.

IN this new column we hope to give our readers news from and about the larger sphere of the Freethought world. That we must not neglect the outer world while fighting our battle here in England, most of us will agree, and this column may be of help and advantage to our readers in their work at home. We shall take a look at the "fourth (black) International," the Holy Roman Church High Council, which decides all the grave affairs of the Church. The members are of the following nationalities: thirty-one Italians, seven Frenchmen, five Spaniards, four American (U.S.A.), four German, two English, two Austrian, two Polish and one each of the following: Belgian, Brazilian, Dutch, Canadian, Portuguese, Checko-Slovakian and Hungarian.

Then to be really world-wide in our scope, let us turn to China. In that pagan country the Holy Roman Church has got a tight hold as the following figures show. During the statistical year 1926-27, there were in the Chinese Empire 2,439,220 Catholics, living in seventy-three bishoprics, of which six were ruled over by native clericals. Of the 3,131 Catholic priests there were 1,271 Chinese natives. During the business year of this concern there were 380,483 baptisms, and 18,986 Catholic weddings were blessed, and this during a troubled year of internal strife in the land. The Catholic claim in all 282,602 students. Fifty-one Chinese are already full blown priests, and in the large seminaries there are 759 more students preparing to take the vows, and a further 1,221 students are being put through the elementary stages.

Perhaps John Rockefeller, who has recently added another one million dollars to the various religious funds of America, "in order that the religion of Jesus Christ might not die," will help the Chinese to find the right path.

The Editors of the Russian *Freethinker*, are, we hear, very busy building up a correspondence exchange with the freethinking world outside their country. In this matter, the journal makes great use of the International Language "Esperanto." In three months there have appeared thirty articles in the paper from foreign Freethinkers. This journal is beautifully got up with coloured illustrations and fine print.

It is now twenty-five years since the law in Germany permitted the cremation of bodies. The law was dated 1900, but there existed a crematory at that time which had been built in 1878 in Gotha, by the efforts of the engineer Stier, who was the pioneer of cremation in Germany. His was the first body to be burned in the crematory, but as he had died before the building was finished, his body had to be disinterred for the purpose. To-day, there are eighty-eight crematories in Germany, and this year a further fifteen are under, or to be put under, construction. Berlin has three and one building almost ready. The figures for the number of cremations carried out during the years since opening, show satisfactory progress. In 1923, the last year for which I have figures, the number for Germany was 33,000.

From Poland comes the news that the *Freethinker* in that country has decided to publish in Polish a Freethought Encyclopedia. The first volume is already prepared, and includes such enticing items as: Secular Calendar. History of the Calendar as an occult medium. Short History of Atheism. Bibliography of Polish Atheistic Works since 1900. Addresses of every Freethought journal in the world. Civil marriages and cremation and a chapter on Secularization work.

The President of the "Association for Atheistic Propaganda," of New York, Mr. Charles Smith, whose hatred of faint-heartedness is shown in the title of the Association, of which he was founder, recently went to "darkest Arkansas" to carry out some propaganda for his Association, and bring a little light to the descendants of the former slaveholders.

But Arkansas is happy in the condition of Byzance of the tenth century, and would have none of him, but hauled him up before the judge for being a public nuisance. However, as he was not prepared to swear on the Book, the judge forbade him to appear in Court to

give evidence. And the Mayor of this town of Little Rock wrote Smith a hasty letter, telling him a few things, such as—the American Constitution is based upon a religious footing—which is the contrary to the truth, of course, as was proved in the case of the commercial treaty between the Dey of Tunis, on the one hand, and the United States on the other. The Dey suspected the U.S. of wishing to push, or allow the religious parties to push, the Christian religion behind the mask of commerce, for he was a Mohammedan Despot, and hated the Christians, and he was assured in writing from the U.S. Foreign Office that the Constitution of the U.S. was in no manner officially hitched up with the religion. But Smith was in Arkansas, and he was told not to call again.

Also, in Texas, there are some peculiar ideas of justice. If you are a Freethinker, and don't care to swear on the Book, you cannot recover the watch someone stole from your pocket. You cannot even be allowed to identify the watch, although it is lying there under your eyes. Since you will not swear, the watch does not exist. East is East . . .

It was an hard task to build up a proletarian cremation movement in Austria of the old days, and the Austrian "Workers' Cremation Society" are to be congratulated on the occasion of their twenty-fifth birthday, which was honoured last month. The membership now stands at 128,000, and the Association is in close contact with the *Freethinker* Movement there.

From Indiana (U.S.A.) comes the news that a gardener of that state, A. E. Kundred, who is a well-known Gladiola-grower has been excluded from the orthodox Church because he has, by trying to discover new varieties of flowers by artificial breeding, "interfered with the Divine Plan."

The local representatives of God in Frankfort-on-Main have banned the play, "Nathan the Wise," of Lessing, because the school children were being given lessons from this "eretic" play. In justification for their action the local religious bigots quote Lessing's own words, that his work fought against "every positive religion," and that he would be glad if "out of the thousands of my readers, only one might begin to doubt the truth and evidence of his religion." Shocking, of course, of Lessing.

The Missioner Fides reports from Tokio that the Passion Play of Oberammergau was presented in the Royal Theatre there in a Japanese translation. The Japanese, however, preferred to spend their holidays in Japanese manner.

The Bench of Bishops in Portugal have decided to build a Catholic high school for their own students.

In the Belgian Congo there are ten vicariates and ten prefectures with 569 white and fourteen native priests to care for them.

L. CORINNA.

## The Phoenix.

'TwiXT fear and desire  
We lighted our fire:  
At first it burned badly,  
Then madly, oh madly;  
And that consuming flame  
Burned up all doubt and shame.

But the flames that destroy  
Can also create;  
Our furnace so great  
Created a boy;  
Created a man,  
As nature did plan.

Our fire has now died;  
Has ceased even to glow;  
But this we both know,  
We both know with pride—  
That the wonderful phoenix is here:  
The triumph of Life over fear.

BAVARD SIMMONS.

## Acid Drops.

Things are getting a bit mixed. First of all the parsons all prayed to God to protect the health of the King, and he became dangerously ill. Then he got better and thanked the doctors for curing him instead of the Lord. Then the Bishops arranged a thanksgiving—when the doctors would permit it. Then the day was almost fixed when all the people would thank God for the King's recovery, and the King fell ill again, and the services had to be postponed. Now we wonder what is going to be done about it? Are we to take the King's relapse as a sign that God is angry with him for thanking the doctors and, inferentially, snubbing his deityship? Or are we to assume that God has nothing to do with either the illness or the recovery? And suppose the King were to die, whose fault would that be? If we were justified in holding a thanksgiving service for the recovery of the King, why not a condemnatory service if the King does not get better? Perhaps the Archbishop of Canterbury will explain. But we expect he will not.

We have received a number of copies of replies from candidates to the questions asked, and some of them are really funny. We have one before us from Mr. E. Everard Gates, who stood for Deptford. Judging from his portrait, Mr. Gates is a young man, a not over-intellectual person, and he shudders through a reply as follows:—

Mr. Gates regards the three questions addressed to him on May 13 as tantamount to asking him if he is an Atheist, and whether he will pledge himself to support the propaganda of Atheistic doctrines.

Mr. Gates has asked me to inform you that his answer is emphatically in the negative, and that, as a member of a constitutional party, he will continue to do all in his power to further the cause of Christianity and Christian teaching.

We suppose we ought to apologise to so very immature a gentleman for having been the cause of this outrage to his feelings. But we do not think there is any danger of Mr. Gates being mistaken for an Atheist after publishing this effusion. All we venture to remind him is that the questions in no way asked him to advocate Atheism, but merely to see (1) that his particular God was left to stand alone without the supporting arm of a policeman; (2) that the State should confine its advantage to subjects that come properly within its scope, and not tax all to pay for the religion for a section. Mr. Gates has much to learn.

Another reply came from Lieut.-Col. Sir Vivian Henderson, Conservative Candidate for the Bootle Division. This gentleman found he could not support Secular Education, because he believes in religious instruction for children, and in the maintenance of religion as one of the bulwarks of civilization. We wonder if it would be of any use asking Sir Vivian, what part religion played in preventing the war, or what part it is now playing in preventing future wars. Men of the stamp of Mr. Gates and Lieut.-Col. Henderson almost cause us to cease wondering at the appearance of such men as the inimitable "Jix." Now we are wondering what religious freaks the new parliament will bring forth.

There are 100,000 people living in 30,000 basements in London, which, by reason of dampness, lack of light and ventilation, are unfit for human habitation. Does it matter very much, so long as we have a Salvation Army to take the unfortunate a few creature comforts and the blessed consolation of religion?

Dr. Donaldson, the Bishop of Salisbury, thinks that the Church (organized Christianity) should make up its mind, speak out, and take action on four issues: world peace, race relationships, industry, and sex. And, says he, the Church's failure to do so is the most conspicuous of all its failures at the present moment. What Dr. Donaldson calls failure is really masterly ecclesiastical wisdom. The astute diplomats who guide the fortunes

of the Church are waiting to see which way "the cat jumps." This noted, the Church will then proceed to give its usual lead to the nation—from the rear. It's a safe position, and show that there really is something in divine inspiration.

A religious weekly tells us that there are 15½ million total abstainers in Great Britain and Northern Ireland. But of these, 10 million are juveniles. This is worth remembering when proposals for Local Option—a means for preventing non-teetotalers from enjoying a stimulating drink—are in the air. The shrill voices of the 10 million juveniles would no doubt be very clamorous, if adult fanatics desired to impress the public that a majority of citizens favoured Local Veto.

A writer asks: "How long do you want to live?" A good answer would be: Long enough to see the people of this country less dominated by the notions disseminated by priests, and more influenced by the finest thought of the best thinkers of every country, age, and civilization.

A reader of a daily paper wants to know the reason for the controversy about tennis ladies showing bare legs? Not at all. There are still many people with unhealthy minds that shudder at the sight of anything made in God's own image. That's the reason for the controversy. When more people become healthily pagan in their notions such controversies will cease.

A pious editor thinks that Thanksgiving Day should have a deep and abiding impression upon the spiritual life of the people. What he really means is this—he hopes the Thanksgiving dodge for advertising religion will influence "outsiders" into regularly attending the parson's houses of business. It's a pious hope, that's all.

Speaking of a visit to St. Peter's, Rome, a writer says that the worshippers advance to the statue of St. Peter and kiss the stone that has been worn smooth by fourteen centuries of kisses. This should interest our hygienists, who no doubt will shudderfully hope that the kissing spot is periodically dowsed with disinfectant. After all, piety and love of God is no safeguard against contagious disease, and the Lord endowed germs with free-will to spread sickness and death.

Many thousands of enthusiastic cyclists spend all day at healthy exercise in the open air on Sundays. They don't trouble the churches overmuch, and the Bishops of Ripon and Bradford are much worried about it. As the cyclists cannot be either frightened or coaxed into attending the Lord's praying-sheds, the Bishops purpose to waylay them at their favourite beauty spots in Yorkshire. The Bishops and their clergy, we learn, "are anxious to fall in with the general wishes of cyclists as to place and time," for the proposed open-air services. This is extremely kind and thoughtful of the clerics, and no doubt the average wheelman is duly appreciative. But we can quite truly say that the general wish of ordinary cyclists is to be left alone. If they want religion they know where the morbid stuff can be found. The mere fact that they don't seek it, but prefer enjoying the lovely countryside, should be a broad enough hint to the clerics to abstain from poking their pious commodity in the faces of cyclists. A timely reminder to the cycling fraternity is, that a very large number of the patrons in this country are supporting a proposal to close houses of refreshment on Sunday, and, we believe, to restrict the hours when food and drink can be obtained at non-licenced houses.

Mr. K. T. Paul, the native General Secretary of the Indian Y.M.C.A., has been telling a pious interviewer about the "dangers of secular education in India." Education in India to-day is almost entirely secular. It

is most unfortunate, he says, that religious education is confined to what the Christian missions give, and to some slight extent to what other religions give. The bulk of the education is in the hands of the State, and is entirely secular. And this fact is deeply troubling our professional Christian friend. He thinks provision ought to be made for imparting religious education—his particular brand, of course. For our part, we hope the State will continue its policy of secular education. India has enough home-grown squabbles of its own. This deplorable condition of things doesn't want worsening by introducing a few millions of Christian sectarian disputants to the religious fray.

In the *New Chronicle* (of Christian education) the Rev. H. C. Carter is asked by a reader for light on the following conundrum. Is the present decline in church attendance and the general lack of interest in religion fulfilling the prophecy in the New Testament, that there will be a falling away in latter days? If not, how are the Christians to interpret such a prophecy? Mr. Carter deals gently with his Bible-befogged friend. He tells him that he ought "never to regard the Bible as a sort of Old Moore's Almanac." That is very good advice. We hope Mr. Carter has the wit to see that if the Bible is so regarded, the fault is God's. If only the Lord had plainly said that the Bible was not to be treated as an Old Moore's Almanac, millions of Christians would never have made fools of themselves over it.

On the authority of Dr. Harold Balme, at a L.H.S. luncheon, many public-spirited Chinese today acknowledge that they owe practically everything to Chinese missions. And it is largely due to the help of the missions that China is producing men and women who will solve the problem of overcoming the selfishness and jealousy behind the present waning factious. No one could possibly doubt the rev. doctor. Take a glance over European history and note how, when Christianity really meant something to men, little of selfishness and jealousy and war there was abroad in the land. If the Christian religion could have so splendidly brought Utopia to Europe, obviously it could work the same miracle in China.

The officious busybodies of the Lord who call themselves the London Public Morality Council, have just issued a list of nine plays of which the Council graciously approved. As the *Daily Sketch* points out, the Council's benediction is too late. Seven of the plays have already been withdrawn, and an eighth is now in its last nights! The *Sketch* adds:—

Still, it would be absurd to assume that only one worthy play will shortly be available. A more reasonable deduction is that membership of a public body [sic], however well meaning, does not necessarily imply a talent for dramatic criticism,

We don't quite see the point of the "reasonable deduction." The Council doesn't specialize in dramatic criticism. It concerns itself with that queer stuff, the parsons' notion of "morality." A play may be the dreariest and stupidest piece of dramatic work ever devised. Yet it may receive a blessing from the Council, provided the play doesn't run counter to the Council's narrow notions. After all, perhaps the Council is doing the public useful service. Theatre patrons, with the list of approved plays in hand, will know which plays they can best avoid if they desire an enjoyable evening's amusement. By all means let the Council continue this useful public service!

The place of Dr. T. R. Glover in the *Daily News* has been taken by the Rev. Prof. P. Carnegie Simpson, D.D. In the Saturday pulpit, this latter gentleman, by clever word-juggling discourses on Friendship and turns the inevitable moral. Of Jesus Christ, he states, "we must choose this Friend," . . . it is very pathetic to have to point out to a professor that a young man who left his mother, . . . not with any tender words, might not be the last word in friendship . . . in fact these professional

exponents write and speak as though the Bible was only available in Latin.

An old Curator of Kew, Mr. W. J. Bean, is retiring at the age of sixty-six, and although it may be stated that we are using a microscope, there is one significant remark he made in the course of an interview. Comparing the pre-war crowds visiting the well-known gardens to that of the present day, he said, "The crowds are quieter, better dressed, and, I think, more appreciative." Following the decline in the number of church attendants, it would appear that nothing dreadful has happened through people preferring the beauties of Kew Gardens instead of the somnolent atmosphere of churches.

The situation is worse than we thought. Even Christians are fed up with some of their own hymns, and the *Daily News* publishes a choice specimen received from a correspondent: hold tight:—

Hark from the tombs a doleful sound,  
The dead are wailing there;  
Each one beside his lowly mound,  
While the last trump rends the air.

And people grumble because Freethinkers want to rob the Christian of his joys!

A director of archaeology deplores the fact that half the total rainfall in Palestine is wasted, because there are no measures taken to conserve it. This is not cited as a testimony to the all-seeing wisdom of God. He sends water for man's use, but somewhat carelessly allows it to be wasted, because he has forgotten to provide something to store it in.

Dr. Nathan Soderblom, Archbishop of Upsala, deplores the fact that there is increasing ignorance in Christendom about the most elementary facts of the Biblical revelation. Millions are growing up, in the United States as well as in Europe, who have never had a Bible in their hands, and do not know the simplest facts about God. There must, we suggest, be something wrong with the current journalistic and parsonic "truism" that all men are instinctively religious. If men were instinctively religious they would never have got in the awful state depicted by the Archbishop.

The Prophetic Society is to hold a conference in London during June. This is nothing to do with "Old Moore," or "Zadkiel," or even the Meteorological Office. The propheticals are concerned with the insane twaddle of Holy Writ.

The Hull District Primitive Methodist Synod is very much disturbed over the growth of Sunday trading—outside the churches. The Rev. B. Oliver, of Bridlington told the Synod, with its full approval, that when an ice-cream vendor came to his town, he told the man that if he came another Sunday, a "dozen hefty fellows" would empty his can. Some hefty fellow ought to wait for this clerical bully trying it on and stand him on his head in the sea for awhile.

Officials in most Christian countries have peculiar ideas as to their duty where religious and non-religious meetings are concerned. From a Canadian paper (will those who are good enough to send us newspaper cuttings, please see that the name and date of the paper is attached?), we see that a Freethought meeting was being held in Yonge Street, Toronto (?), was dispersed by the police owing to the threatening attitude of the crowd. The acting-Inspector explained that the meeting was broken up for no other reason than that a breach of the peace seemed imminent. "It was not in any sense a religious meeting, so we had no necessity to protect the speakers." From that we gather that, in the mind of this official, the only speakers he feels called upon to protect are religious speakers. Others must look after themselves.



## National Secular Society.

THE FUNDS of the National Secular Society are now legally controlled by Trust Deed, and those who wish to benefit the Society by gift or bequest may do so with complete confidence that any money so received will be properly administered and expended.

The following form of bequest is sufficient for anyone who desires to benefit the Society by will:—

I hereby give and bequeath (*Here insert particulars of legacy*), free of all death duties, to the Trustees of the National Secular Society for all or any of the purposes of the Trust Deed of the said Society, and I direct that a receipt signed by two of the trustees of the said Society shall be a good discharge to my executors for the said legacy.

Any information concerning the Trust Deed and its administration may be had on application.

### 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.

FREETHINKER ENDOWMENT TRUST.—R. B. Harrison, 10s.; L.S. (Rhodesia), £1.

W. HUMPHREYS.—See "Acid Drops." The plain duty of an official is to offer precisely the same protection to all meetings, quite irrespective of the purpose for which the meeting is held. If the gathering is for an illegal purpose the remedy lies to hand.

B. BOTT.—It is not very advisable to carry on a controversy when one party is here, and another 7,000 miles away. We are always willing to let the judgment of our comments on current affairs rest with those who read what we have to say. We agree with you that religion is bound up with so many other things, that it is impossible adequately to deal with it without one expressing some views on affairs in general. But we do not expect every reader to agree with us, and should not care to write for them if they did.

C. L. PRANCE.—It was received quite safely. You will have heard officially by now.

J. P. PHILLIPS.—There are thousands of Freethinkers in the neighbourhood of New Cross. We shall be pleased to give any assistance we can towards organizing them. Thanks for replies.

R. C. ASHWORTH.—We note your appreciation of *Einstein and God*. When we can get the time we may write a few sketches of the main problems of philosophy, and shock the regular philosophers by writing so that the average man or woman may find out what it is all about. We agree as to the general apathy of people, but we do not think it is greater now than it used to be. But the general public figures more than it did, and that throws up the ordinary person into public notice.

J. CLAYTON.—Pleased to hear of your successful meeting at Accrington. Send a more detailed report of anything special, for publication.

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.

The offer of "John's Granpa" to send twenty copies of Mr. Cohen's *Four Lectures on Freethought and Life* was quickly taken up. Very many more than twenty was applied for, and thanks to another friend, all applicants have been supplied. We have had so many applications that we have sent a number of copies away on our own account. But that source of supply is now exhausted, although applications are still coming in.

Readers of the report of the National Secular Society's Conference will have noted the resignation of the General Secretary. It was a case of a dislike to the routine work which is so essential to the right conduct of business. In the circumstances the Conference left it to the Executive to appoint a Secretary until the annual meeting of next year. At its last meeting the Executive appointed Mr. R. H. Rosetti to the post, and the Board of the Secular Society, Limited also appointed him to act as its Secretary. Mr. Rosetti is a life-long Freethinker, for many years a member of the Executive, and devoted to the Cause. He is therefore quite familiar with the machinery of the Society, and will, we have no doubt, do the Society good service.

By a curious oversight Mr. Rosetti's name was omitted from the list of speakers in the report of the evening meeting at the Annual Conference. Mr. Rosetti was the first speaker, and led off in a very interesting and much appreciated speech.

A new leaflet has just been issued by the National Secular Society. It is entitled, *What is Secularism?* and should prove very useful by way of introducing the subject to all sorts of people. The leaflet is on sale at the price of 6d. per 100, and we invite those of our friends who are inclined to do a little propagandist work to send for a thousand.

We take this opportunity of again reminding our friends, of our offer to send the *Freethinker* for six weeks on receipt of name and address and the cost of postage—threepence. This is one of the best ways by which to bring along new readers. If a man is not bitten with the *Freethinker* after reading six copies, it may safely be assumed that from our point of view he is hopeless. But everyone ought to be given a fair trial before condemnation.

The Manchester Branch has arranged an outing and ramble for next Sunday. Will all members and friends who intend joining the party meet at Todd Street, Manchester, for the 9.45 a.m. bus to Edenfield. Teas can be provided, but it would be as well to carry food for lunch. From Edenfield the party will proceed to Waterfoot through the Holme Valley.

Freedom of thought, being intimately connected with the happiness and dignity of man in every stage of his being, is of so much more importance than the preservation of any constitution, that to infringe the former under pretence of supporting the latter is to sacrifice the means to the end.—Robert Hall.

## Religion : Folkways and Experience.

(Continued from page 347.)

ANY attempt to define religion as a special psychic happening ends in the "inability to find any special aspect of the mind which would serve as such a test, and it ends . . . in directing attention to the objective reality with religion deals as the essential mark of religion." The same conclusion meets all "claims to determine the whole character of religion psychologically by denying its validity. It does not deny that this objective reference belongs essentially to it, but it denies all reality to the reference, and professes to explain from the mind itself, how this peculiar kind of illusion has arisen, and to make psychology in consequence sole arbiter." But illusion is not confined to religion, nor is it distinctive of religion. "Therefore, if all religious beliefs were proved to be illusions, this would not, in any case, make illusion a distinctive mark of religion, but the distinctive mark would still be in the objects about which the illusion exists. And, further, the reality or unreality of its objects can no more be determined purely psychologically in religion than, say, in commerce. For psychology an object is real when it is regarded as existing outside the mind; and the determination of whether it is actually real or not is a matter of evidence and not of psychology. The judgment that the object of religion is an illusion is merely a negative conclusion about the existence of an outside reality, and must go as much beyond mere consideration of purely mental states as the most positive.

"As a matter of fact, there is no psychological difference between the theories of religion as concerned with illusion and the theories of it, as concerned with ultimate reality . . . The sole difference concerns validity, which quite clearly is not a matter of psychology: and, in point of fact, the actual reasons for the different judgments about reality are not psychological, but are drawn from physical science or empirical philosophy." These classifications of religion "profess to settle the matter on psychological grounds alone, but . . . make it plain that religion is a reference to an external environment, and that this reference remains characteristic of religion whether the environment be real or imaginary . . . The essential religious element is an objective reference.

"All these theories, therefore, direct attention away from merely psychological marks of religion. Quite as clearly, by regarding it as illusion as by regarding it as the ultimate reality, they show that the essential quality of religion is the claim to deal with a special kind of environment, which has its own particular sanctions. If this environment does not exist, religion has no basis. And, even so, it would not be a mere psychological state to be described as illusion, but it would be a wrong objective reference due to misunderstanding, not about our minds, but about our environment, so that it ought rather to be described as delusion. Wherefore, any theory of religion as illusion also brings us back to the view of religion as essentially a dealing with an unseen environment of absolute worth which demands worship. If this environment were proved to be non-existent, religion would be shown to be baseless, but its essential character would still depend on this supposed objective reference, and not on some peculiar quality of belief, or pious feeling, or practical trust. And, as it is the same human nature which deals with all environment, if the environment does not exist, we should the less expect anything peculiar in man's way

of dealing with it, because, while every real higher environment stirs higher faculties and affords larger opportunities for displaying them, an imaginary one cannot be the source of such a development.<sup>34</sup> . . . Whether this environment be real or not, religion is an affirmation of what we may call broadly the supernatural, and . . . its quality is determined by this outward reference, and not by any particular kind of subjective feeling or attitude, while its validity wholly depends on whether such an invisible world exists or not."<sup>35</sup> The inquiry into what enters into religious experience returns to the use of such a supposed world as a basis for experience. "When the methods of philosophy are impotent to determine 'truth,' our only recourse is to a verification by experience, as in the case of scientific hypothesis, and to a study of origins and motives. There are circumstances where acquaintance with the origin of a belief, together with a knowledge of its inherent difficulties, bring down to the vanishing point the probability of its truth."<sup>36</sup> The outcome for all religious belief is metatheism. It is from this point of view that religious experience must be considered.

Religion can offer nothing unique and distinctive. It can add nothing of its own to life. It can at most turn and shape experience to its beliefs. It merely makes experience fit certain non-existent objects which have been set up, defined and enforced by the folkways. In regard to truth, its beliefs are empty and invalid, in regard to experience they are vicarious and defective. The patterning of experience unto them is null, void, and vicious.

### IV.

#### THE EXPERIENCE AND THE FOLKWAYS.

Religion is of necessity the experiencing of religious folkways and Mores in one way or another. In the more original and extraordinary religious experiences some firsthand experience is interpreted by being made to fall in with the religious folkways. Having once occurred, it takes their supposed objects for its cause. From these nonentities, then, comes its start, meaning, and importance. This is the way of the more outstanding and singular religious experiences. The experience occurs. The religious interpretation is given. The interpretation comes from the folkways. It is brought to the original experience to explain and glorify it. "But to think of God—any kind of god—as the occasion of a sensory or affective experience, however unusual in intensity or quality, is to ascribe a cause to an intuitive, immediate experience. The confusion of this automatic assignment of a cause with immediate intuitive experience reveals how deeply ingrained is the habit of assigning causes."<sup>37</sup> The experience is merely assigned a traditional religious source. But this is obviously a subsequent insertion which was no part of the original experience. This bogus interpretation has, of course, no standing as evidence of the existence of the objects religiously believed in. Furthermore no experience can be a reason for believing. The event of religious experience prove that some religious folkway has intruded on an experience. The acceptably religious interpre-

<sup>34</sup> "But as the sense of the sacred," continues an unguarded Petition!

<sup>35</sup> John W. Oman: "The Sphere of Religion," *Science, Religion and Reality*. Edited, Joseph Needham. (London: The Sheldon Press: 1925.) (pp. 273-274, 277, 280.) Apologetic derived from the history and dialectic of German idealism, but containing this entirely sound demonstration.

<sup>36</sup> Leuba: *The Belief in God and Immortality*. (viii.)

<sup>37</sup> James H. Leuba: *The Psychology of Religious Mysticism*. (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Company, 1925.) (pp. 314-315.)

tative is naively mistaken for a genuine part of the experience. *Should there be no ground for belief other than physical phenomena and inner experiences, then, for those who are acquainted with modern scientific conceptions, there could be no belief in God.*"<sup>38</sup> This is the finding of metatheism. Not only is there no God. But at present there can be no God. For any evidence for the existence of God offered by experience is an insertion that patently follows after the experience itself. There is "no difference between religious and non-religious ecstasies other than those due to a different interpretation being itself the cause of important affective and volitional phenomena."<sup>39</sup>

But the more ordinary and accustomed religious experiences are simply built round the religious folkways in the first place. This is the usual religious experience. This ordinary run of religious experience is not continuous with the unique flights of religious experience. The religious experience is no lesser reflection of the great conversions and mysticisms. It is a radically different experience in which the folkways play a radically different part. In the major religious experiences the folkways are secondarily brought into the experience which could occur without them. In the minor religious experience it is the religious folkways themselves which alone are in the first place experienced. These folkways form centers about which the experiences must cluster. The folkway becomes the focus of a sentiment. The sentiment is built up around the religious folkway. This is the religious experience which actually prevails. The entire religious experience is made up of religious sentiments built upon the folkways. The sentiment is unrelated to anything real, for there are no existents to correspond to religious beliefs. But it is organized about a religious object which exists only in the folkways.

The folkways are taken up from the environment. and from them and the Mores the patterns of acting and experiencing that go with them. This is the source of religious experience "The child . . . begins by living, in and according to the Mores of his family and societal environment. The vast mass of men in each case never do anything else but thus imbibe a character from the environment. If they learn the religious dogma at all, it is superficially, negligently, erroneously. They are trained in the ritual, habituated to the usages, imbued with the notions of the societal environment."<sup>40</sup> This is the beginning and the end of the common religious experience. This parental, sacerdotal and social pigeon-milk religious experience is the sole experience of "your ordinary religious believer, who follows the conventional observances of his country . . . His religion has been made for him by others, communicated to him by tradition, retained by habit . . . This second-hand religious life" is the actual widespread mass religion. But certainly no "original experiences . . . were the pattern-setters to all this mass of suggested feeling and imitated conduct."<sup>41</sup> Such major experiences called upon folkways to make them religious. These lesser experiences build upon the religious folkways primarily, and entirely. They are taken out of the Mores, not copied from the saints.

CURTIS BRUEN.

(To be continued.)

## The "Religious Sense."

IMMANUEL KANT, who "tried to smuggle in by the back door the Deity he had turned out by the front gate" (Bury), probably came near to the Positivist standpoint when he said, "The two things which strike awe into the soul are the moral law within and the starry sky above."

Certain it is that these two things can produce in many people a peculiar mental state which is vaguely accounted for as the "religious sense." And when all theological systems have failed, when all the gods and demi-gods are banished from the universe, when science is finally acclaimed the supreme guide of man, there still remains this "religious sense" to hamper and hinder a completely rational explanation of our experiences. Wordsworth felt it, Comte espoused it, Paine did not discard it, Spencer found room for it. It may in time become the main stand-by, trump card and *coup d'état* of the Modernist Movement, now growing in popularity, and with no small promise of saving the Church from early destruction. Its pedigree, however, runs into Positivism, or Humanism, the "religion of humanity," founded by Comte in the nineteenth century.

After making the cardinal mistake that the "religious sense" is ineradicable in human nature, Frederic Harrison, who has thrown much light on Positivism as the indefatigable disciple of Comte, was, I think, tolerably rational. Given his premiss that man is essentially religious, his conclusions are, to me, acceptable. But with hundreds of thousands of living instances to prove the contrary, it would seem that Positivism, or any other-ism postulating a permanent religious sense, is destined to failure.

And yet it may be only a half-way stage on the road to Atheism: it probably has been in many cases. It is well to remember that the "religious sense," whatever it might be (I persist in raised commas because the term is so vague and controversial) means something definite in the case of all those who, if they alone comprised humanity, would bear out Harrison's assertion. We cannot, of course, put it into a watertight compartment. The germs of it can exist only as part of the great mental complex. The Atheist would say he had grown out of it, the Positivist that his was sublimated. It had its birth, I would suggest, owing to a preponderance of Unreason over Reason. Perhaps that is an unsatisfactory way of explaining it, but it is generally recognized that the path was marked by (a) Wonder; (b) Ignorance; (c) Fear; (d) Religion, in the order named. So much for its birth. With regard to its death, where it has died it has been killed, not so much by the challenge of Reason to Superstition—it seems almost to withstand that challenge, but by another factor, functioning possibly under other names, but usually known as Nihilism. The point I would like to emphasize, however, is, that this "religious sense" was born before theology, and has outlived it.

For all intents and purposes the Positivist is practically an Atheist. He claims to be just as religious as the Christian, but his religion is of Humanism, as opposed to Superhumanism. At the same time, if we take Harrison as an example, we can have no hesitation in saying that the Positivist is Atheistic, knowing nothing of supernatural intervention. Harrison, of course, would be mightily indignant at being called an Atheist. He made this clear in his essay on *Deistical Criticism*: "Positivism is emphatically not Atheism, and the last thing it would countenance is the barren task of attempting a logical disproof of God." And again in *Neo-Christianity*, "We are not Atheists, revilers of Christianity, or Secularists, who discard all religion. We have every wish to preserve the essence of the Gospels and the essence of the Bible . . . Christianity is a real part of our religion." This was only following in the footsteps of Auguste Comte, who is credited with "Atheists are the most irrational of all theologians." Harrison's hatred of Atheism went even further. He referred to it as "rank" and "repulsive sophistry," and made the uncompromising statement that "bare materialism and atheism have led to egotism, conceit and hardness." (Neo-Christianity). This man, apparently, was one of

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.* (p. 304.)

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.* (p. 315.)

<sup>40</sup> Sumner: *War and Other Essays.* (p. 129.)

<sup>41</sup> James: *The Varieties of Religious Experience.* (p. 6.)

the many whose lives are based on Atheism, whose teaching endorses it, and who would stop short only at the name. That he hated the name is shown by the ill-judged epithets he applied to it. And where has Materialism and Atheism led to egotism, conceit and hardness? Was this criticism based on actual observation? Or was it merely evidence of an unbalanced prejudice which hurled abuse at hazard? Materialism may according to its opponents, be egotistic, pessimistic, inhuman, or any unfavourable term which comes to mind. That is just what it ought to be, according to Christian doctrines and Positivist imaginings. But the criticism must always be of Materialism, as a system of philosophy, not of Materialists, as persons. The rule is given, but no examples are quoted. One can have no hesitation, therefore, in assuming that egotism, conceit and hardness are qualities which Harrison thought he himself would possess if he had to resign himself to Atheism.

So he stuck to Religion. This, moreover, after overthrowing all its essential characteristics of Supernaturalism, or better still, Unnaturalism). His religion had nothing to do with another life. And he called it Humanism, the "religion of humanity."

Positivism and Atheism, however akin may be their practical aims, are divided in the world of ideas by the "religious sense." In one it has been obliterated by thought based on discovery; in the other it is accepted as inevitable, and still lingers on to colour the entire scheme of what has in it the potentialities of sound teaching. Or to put it in another way, if the Atheist could be inoculated with something that would give him the "religious sense," he would soon become a Positivist. If, on the other hand, the "religious sense" could be obliterated from the mental make-up of the Positivist, his teaching would immediately be identified as Atheism.

The Positivist may be regarded as Atheistic, naturalistic—even materialistic, because I do not think that, with its love of science, it has ever denied the universal application of the principle of determinism. F. J. Gould has done much to unite Humanism and Rationalism, so that the term Rationalist might also be applied to Positivism. In fact, if Positivism and Modernism are, as some think, going to dominate the religion of the future, they may draw for their resources on Humanists, Rationalists, Reverent Agnostics, Religion-without-Revelationists, and others in whom the "religious sense" is not yet dead, besides being a refuge ground for timid Freethinkers.

There is only one sure way of gaining Truth. It is by abolishing error first. The Positivist thinks otherwise. On grounds of expediency, the Modernist also thinks otherwise. It is a positive faith, not a negative criticism, that the Positivist has in view. He has no wish to "disturb beliefs or insinuate doubts" (Harrison). He is trying to found truth on error. So is the Modernist. He is running with the hares and hunting with the hounds. So, again, is the Modernist. His attempt to convert the Christian and the Deist without disturbing their beliefs is as incongruent as preaching Modernism from a pulpit. Error must on no account be uprooted, but somehow changed into truth.

It may be objected that, on the whole, there can be little harm in any religion so broad as Positivism or Modernism. Unfortunately, this is not true, and from what has been said, I would put forward the following as the chief harmful effects of the "religious sense":—

(a) It tends to create a barrier in philosophic thought, bringing vindictiveness against those who do not possess a sense of religion.

(b) In spite of the name of Positivism, it sanctions the use of vague terms and phrases, such as "soul," "religious," "divine power," etc.—more lumber for science to shift.

(c) There seems a likelihood of retaining many of the associations of the old theological systems, especially the Church. Harrison desired a set of religious institutions and habits that would "train the heart and feeling." What can these be, but expensive ceremonies different in degree, but not in kind, from those of the primitive savage?

G. H. TAYLOR.

## The Wisdom of Maxim Gorki.

### "In the World."

If the world in which Maxim Gorki had his being was hard on him, he has made a confession in so far that he has been hard upon himself. It takes courage to withdraw from one's self and give an utterly unbiased and unprejudiced examination of one's own thoughts, moods, and deeds. There is a peculiar fascination in what is really an autobiography of Maxim Gorki, in his book called *In the World*. In the same way that Blake asked "Why wasn't I born with a different face," Maxim Gorki might well ask himself, "Why was I born to be as impressionable as clay, with a memory also that records every nuance and intensity of experience?" Here then, is no book for babes, nor for the hyper-critical mind, nor again for the type of human being which is entranced by the rose, but refuses to recognize that its roots are in the muddy mysteries of the earth.

Gorki, with characteristic Russian simplicity confesses, not like St. Augustine, nor again like any of our stylists labouring for effect. He confesses, and it may be in this very frank attitude that he plays upon the sensitive feelings of the reader who does not for one moment imagine the earth to be a Paradise, nor yet an Inferno. Gorki takes his place as a shop-boy at a fashionable boot shop, and in this situation he sees the world in a restricted area, but sufficient for him to realize that men and women in this particular world are swayed by passions, with the balance of judgment against the quantity of good that he found.

The first chapter is an epitome of ignorance, cruelty and sympathy, and the Cossack soldier who comes to see Gorki in the hospital counsels him not to be afraid. In the second chapter, the reader is introduced to a most beautiful character, his grandmother, who also comes to see him in the hospital, and if we may smile at her counsel to the boy, and perhaps smile broadly at the reasoning, it is possible that nearly all boys have received at some time from their old guardian angels the following curious advice. "If you do something for other people your hand will soon be well." Gorki, at the beginning of his attempt to come to grips with life, tells us also that his surroundings were at any rate, forcing him to think. There are many curious characters that meet us here, and for a wager Gorki, as a boy, sleeps on a tomb in a cemetery with the full knowledge of his grandmother, and here we find the real sweetness of a grandmother's advice in the following injunction to him, after he had won his wager. His grandmother had come to the cemetery next morning to fetch him away, and in his own words she said to him gently: "You have to experience things for yourself in this world, dear heart. If you cannot teach yourself, no one else can teach you." Another side-light on the beauty of his grandmother's character is shown by Gorki's admission that whenever she had saved a little money from the sale of mushrooms and nuts, she used to lay it on window-sills as secret alms, and she herself went about in rags and patches even on Sundays. In chapter three, the careful reader, who does not read for the sake of covering the ground, will find here that Gorki has a close sympathy with one of our own writers, Richard Jefferies. It is true that he is aware of the callous and indifferent attitude of nature, and has, through his translator, a tighter grip on reality than Jefferies. In other words, Jefferies' love of nature is almost parochial in comparison. The following may well have been lifted bodily from Jefferies' *Story of My Heart*, or *The Life of the Fields*:—

The forest called up a feeling of peace and solace in my heart, and in that feeling, all my griefs were swallowed up, and all that was unpleasant was obliterated; in that time also my senses acquired a peculiar keenness, my hearing and sight became more acute, my memory more retentive, my store-house of impressions widened.

His grandfather is part of the game of battledore and

shuttlecock with his grandmother, and he is garrulous, ill-tempered, but at times Gorki records something from the old man's savouring of sense.

There is some dialogue about God and saints and death, and those peculiar subjects which have interested and tantalized a good number of all the living, and at one point, the old grandfather, in one of his talkative moods says: "If families live together in unity, like fingers on a hand . . ." But grandmother will have none of this, she knows him. Like some sudden stroke from a knife, she cuts him short: "Leave off father! You have been uttering words like that all your life, and I should like to know who is the better for them? All your life you have eaten into everyone as rust corrodes iron." It may be remembered that Sheridan, in the last act of "The School for Scandal," gets rid of the insufferable Joseph Surface with an unfinished platitude on his lips, and grandmother's homely wisdom, after she has lived an intolerable number of years with her husband, has no time to spare for tinkling brass and sounding cymbals.

WILLIAM REPTON.

(To be continued.)

## Bible and Beer.

A CHRISTIAN friend, a "whole Bibler," sends me the following remarks on Mr. Foote's pamphlet:—

Mr. Foote would do well if he read the Bible over again. For other prohibitions, see Prov. xxi. 17, 23, 29, 30. Hosea iv. 11. Heb. ii. 5 (see page 9 *Bible and Beer*). Tim. i. 3, 13. Read the Bible for yourself and see how it condemns strong drink. On Infidelity, read 2nd Peter iii. 3—"There shall come in the last days scoffers seeking after strong lusts and saying, where is the promise of His coming?"—We have God's Word for such things, so we are not surprised.—I remain, faithfully, J.B.

So Mr. Foote is answered, but, alas, cannot answer back, unless he is immortal in that "other place"—where I, in the way I am going, may duly arrive, in which event I may seek him out and show him the error of his ways, but even there Foote will not be downcast, and he and I may shake the roof again with those old "explosions of laughter!" for, "thank God," the sense of humour is immortal. The Tin Tabernacle, like the regular Church, is immune from this, and most other, even horse sense, and to both, the Bible is the only and indispensable scourge of intemperance and immorality. But our ingenuous friend, in his note, ignores those passages where the Bible commends strong drink to him who would be merry, and to him who is ready to perish. I think it was a most holy man, Martin Luther, to wit, who compared the Bible to a wax nose that could be twisted into any shape desired—truly a hard proposition for the Commentators—unless they themselves be twisters. Among other things, the Book advises murder; the massacre of infants; desertion of wife and family for the love of God; of friend, lover, teacher, benefactor, of all the precious flowers of humanity for that one Idolatry, for that heaven no one wants to go to—or stays out of as long as he can: how he runs after the priests of material medicine to keep him living, even in a poor fragment of mortal existence, here below!—In one passage at least the Book commends harlotry; and the lives of most of the men "after God's own heart" would not adorn a biography or edify a generation; or only in a negative way, as a drunken father may be his son's best advocate of temperance—what a useful point, this, for the Commentators! what a straw for a drowning man! The fact is the Bible is its own strongest condemnation—as Thomas Paine has shown for all time and especially for present and future "advanced" clergy—who advance, backward, to the conclusions of the great pioneer. But the "Brethren" of the humbler shed are made of

sterner (or stupider) stuff, they neither advance nor retreat, but remain, the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever, world without end, amen. Simple, sincere, egotistical, they begin by believing and end so. Were the Book ten times more incredible, so much more glorious would be the victory of their faith. This impeccable blessed assurance breeds a type one knows by his walk, and looks for the gilt gingerbread of the Book under his arm; he is smug, complacent, comfortable, unconcerned; for he is holy; others were foolish, he was wise; he lives, others perish: he that believeth—the bigger the lie the better, shall be saved—he that believeth not shall be damned. My friend is not quite one of these, yet much at home in their conclusive, exclusive company. These—how well, how long I have known them, how intimate their interior soul, so valuable to them, so paltry to me! These; they are not even of the "simple faith" lauded by Burns and Tennyson—neither of whom, personally, being cursed with reason and logic, it satisfied. Truly one has often envied good people with the simplicity referred to, recalling Gray's famous line: "Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise." But there is a crude, pretentious, egotistical faith of these others that the mildest philosophy must allow no quarter, that cries for gall and wormwood and vitriolic ink from even so mild a mannered pirate as myself—for its unchecked exercise leads to the familiar excesses of the spiritually drunk: raucous jeremiads of the streets; "woe (woe, unutterable woe," of the dismal saviours of souls; segregation of the saved; the turning of simple faith into foaming fanaticism; the shunning of all popular entertainments as so many vestibules of the damned: in short, making this world a place, not to live in, rather to die in, and as quickly as possible, but for the duty nature imposes on nobler souls of ridding the world of its pious pests.

ANDREW MILLAR.

## Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

"THE CONDUCT OF THE UNDERSTANDING."

SIR,—Mr. Joseph Bryce's article (May 26) on Locke's philosophy is interesting, but he might note that the reference in my letter of April 28 was to Locke's little book of fragmentary essays, *The Conduct of the Understanding*. These are not included in Locke's larger work, the *Essays*, although originally meant for inclusion therein. Mr. Bryce's earlier article, *The Dismal Science*, concerned logic and reasoning; hence my suggestion for an article on the *Conduct* as an aid to reasoning.

Mr. Bryce would like a simplified form of logic taught to children, as a means for improving the present-day education which leaves them logically helpless. Locke, however, doubted whether a grounding in formal logic was sufficient to produce vigorous understanding and accurate reasoning. His aim, in the *Conduct*, was to supplement the logic of the schools by the addition of practical precepts and warnings "sufficient to make men see some faults in the conduct of their understanding, and suspect there may be more."

Locke, says Dr. Thomas Fowler, emphasizes "what may be called the moral causes of fallacious reasoning: prejudice, haste, mental indolence, over-regard for authority, love of antiquity or novelty, self-sufficiency, despondency, and the various other conditions of mind that are quite as effective in barring the way to truth as any sophisms, however skilful, which others may attempt to impose upon us." One may say, then, that Locke's *Conduct* can be commended to Freethinkers (and others) for its psychological insight into the causes of inaccurate reasoning—about which little or nothing is said in many books on logic. Hallam, the historian, advises parents to put the little book into the hands of a boy when the reasoning faculties become developed; it would give him "independence of thinking."

What might be still more useful would be a small book on similar lines, embodying the best of Locke's ideas, for modern readers. It wants writing by some practica Ipsychologist with a gift for clear and simple English, who has not only had some experience of debate, but is also well versed in modern psychology, logic, and scientific method. A generation acquainted with such a book would be more wary of parsonic and journalistic bunkum, and considerably more susceptible to Free-thought reasoning.

D.P.S.

## A PLEA FOR TOLERATION.

SIR,—Whilst being prepared to join with D. Matthews in the condemnation of the Freethinker who would sit on the fence, and sacrifice his convictions in preference to loss of Social Caste, one would hesitate to agree to his Steam Hammer condemnation of the Agnostic whom he pillories.

One must appreciate that the Christian who peels off the customs and superstitions of a lifetime, must supply his mind gradually with a new fabric of the scheme of things, gradually and thoroughly, under a process of elimination and re-absorption.

When such shedding of religion sets in of its own volition, the transitory stage must consist of reasoning, acceptance, and finally conviction of the substituted scheme of things, in his or her mind.

Fearful at all times, of subscribing to anything which could not stand the test of cold logic, the evolving of the beliefs must naturally be slow in process.

The acceptance of the scheme of things entire, must therefore of necessity be built upon the most solid foundation essential to conviction, and proof against the most devastating arguments of his or her opponents.

When the mind having arrived at some conviction of a theory for the acceptance of a scientific explanation of matter, and an explanation or thesis upon the evolution of the vegetative to the organic, it will readily embrace Atheism, since the fabric is then completely woven.

Ought we not to be tolerant and helpful more than forcefully condemning?

Ridicule and intolerance makes us many enemies, and drives away potential converts, fearful of developing the same type of mind.

Politically the masses are being taught to expect a Quart from a Pint Pot, do not let us develop the same expectancy.

M. WILSON.

## National Secular Society.

## MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE MEETING, 31 MAY, 1929.

THE President, Mr. Chapman Cohen, in the chair.

Also present: Mrs. Quinton, Junr., Miss Kough, Messrs. Neate, Gorniot, Moss, Rosetti, Corrigan, Hornibrook, Easterbrook, Quinton and Mr. Mann.

Minutes of previous meeting read and confirmed.

Minutes of Special Meeting held on May 7, were read and confirmed.

Apologies for absence were received from Miss Vance and Mr. Silvester.

The President reported to the Executive the resignation of Mr. F. Mann, and Mr. R. H. Rosetti was appointed as General Secretary, pending confirmation by the next Annual Conference.

Mr. F. A. Hornibrook and Mr. Coles were co-opted as a member of the Executive.

New members were admitted for the Parent Society, and for the Liverpool, West London, and Manchester Branches.

The President reported a very successful Conference at Manchester, and Miss Kough was thanked for her services in carrying out the work of the meetings.

Correspondence received from the South London, West London, Liverpool, and Plymouth Branches, and from outside Societies.

It was decided to arrange for a number of outdoor meetings in the London District during the summer.

R. H. ROSETTI,  
General Secretary.

## Society News.

THE second week of Mr. Whitehead's visit to Durham was occupied in lecturing at various places with different results. At the beginning of the period several of the meetings suffered severely from the competition of election meetings, but the three meetings held at Stanley were very successful, attracting large crowds of interested and even sympathetic people, as well as the attention of a Catholic policeman who was *not* sympathetic, but who fortunately interfered too late to prevent the message being delivered. The Chester-les-Street Branch intends to follow up Mr. Whitehead's work, especially in Stanley, where there is a fruitful field of activity. The Sunday evening meeting was held on the Town Moor, Newcastle. In consequence of the exhibition, immense crowds of people invaded the Moor. A considerable audience assembled around the Freethought platform, and showed intense appreciation to the address to which it listened. This meeting was the largest and best Mr. Whitehead has ever remembered in Newcastle, and the local members were encouraged by this good send off to the season's activities.

We have to especially thank Messrs. T. Brown and J. T. Brighton for their help during the fortnight spent in Durham county.

Mr. Whitehead will be in Liverpool until June 14.

## 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.

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (The London Institution Theatre, South Place, Moorgate, E.C.2): 11.0, C. E. M. Joad, B.A.—“The New Outlook in Psychology and Philosophy.”

## OUTDOOR.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 12 noon, Messrs. J. Hart and R. G. Lennard; 3.30, Messrs E. Betts and B. A. Le Maine; 6.30, Messrs. A. H. Hyatt and Maurice Maubrey. Freethought meetings every Wednesday at 7.30, Messrs. J. Hart and R. G. Lennard. Every Friday at 7.30, Mr. B. A. Le Maine. The *Freethinker* can be obtained outside Hyde Park during our meetings.

DETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N.S.S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand): 3.15, Mr. P. P. Corrigan.—A Lecture.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Ravenscourt Park, Hammersmith): 3.30, Mr. R. G. Lennard and others.

WEST HAM BRANCH N.S.S. (outside Technical College, Romford Road, Stratford, E.): 7.0, Mr. R. H. Rosetti.—A Lecture.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Regent's Park, near the Fountain): 6.30, Mr. L. Ebury.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Clapham Common): 11.30, Mr. F. Mann; Brockwell Park, 6.30, Mr. F. Mann; Friday, Liverpool Street, Chamberwell Gate, 8.0.

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

## COUNTRY.

BOLTON BRANCH N.S.S.—Mr. Geo. Whitehead will speak on the Town Hall Steps, Bolton, on June 15, and following fortnight. A Ramble to Boredon Woods will take place on June 9; meet at Town Hall, 2.30 p.m.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE BRANCH N.S.S. (Town Moor, near North Road Entrance): 7.0, Mr. J. Cecil Keast.—A Lecture.

GLASGOW BRANCH N.S.S.—Ramble to Patterson Woods. Meet at Spiers Bridge at 12 o'clock prompt.

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N.S.S.—Mr. G. Whitehead will lecture each evening as follows: Sunday and Monday, June 9 and 10, Queen's Drive (opposite Baths); Tuesday, June 11, Beaumont Street; Wednesday, June 12, Islington Square; Thursday, June 13, corner of High Park Street and Park Road; Friday, June 14, Islington Square.

MR. JACK CLAYTON will lecture at the following places this week: Sunday, June 9, Blackburn Market, 7 p.m.; Monday, June 10, Worsthorne, 7.30 p.m.; Thursday, June 13, Sabden, 7.30 p.m.

PLYMOUTH BRANCH N.S.S. (4 Swilley Road, Devonport): 7.30, Mr. J. Churchill—A Lecture. Next meeting at same address, on Tuesday, July 2, at 7.30 p.m. Members and friends invited.

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



## WHEN YOU TALK

of clothes you are oft reminded of us, we are sure. When you think of new clothes, you think also of being measured, and of having garments fitted on. None of our regular clients do so at all. They merely choose a cloth and a style, and say to us, make so-and-so from so-and-so. With our system, it is once measured always measured, and once pleased, always satisfied. This goes on unflinching, time after time, and year after year. This is worth doing something about.

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