

The

FREETHINKER

FOUNDED · 1881

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

VOL. XLIX.—No. 24

SUNDAY, JUNE 16, 1929

PRICE THREEPENCE

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS.

	Page
God in History.—The Editor	369
The Religious Road to Ruin.—Mimmermus	371
A Candid Diplomatist.—W. Mann	372
Ferns—Past and Present.—T. F. Palmer	373
The Tactics of the Modern Sophist.—Keridon	374
Spiritual Tipsters.—Alan Tyndal	378
Religion: Folkways and Experience.—Curtis Bruen	378
Freethinkers and Their Fate.—L. Corinna	379
The Wisdom of Maxim Gorki.—William Repton	380
Acid Drops, To Correspondents, Sugar Plums, Letters to the Editor, etc.	

Views and Opinions.

God in History.

The believer in purpose in the physical world is misled by a very simple fallacy. He sees a result and he assumes a purpose. He does not reflect that results are always in turn part of a process, and that no absolute break in the chain of causation is even conceivable. The result of to-day is merged in the process that ends in a different result to-morrow. Nature is a stream of being from which, in imagination, we detach parts, and forgetting this, think them afterwards as separate existences.

The fallacy that is so common with those who believe in purpose in the physical world reappears in the arena of historical investigation, particularly in connexion with the history of Christianity. There is, for example, an argument called by theologians, "The preparation in History for Christ." This consists in taking the various conditions—the world empire of the Romans, the commingling of religious sects teaching doctrines which were afterwards taught by the Christian Church, the social conditions which made it possible for the Christian Church to exist, and then, instead of seeing in this the natural history of the Christian religion, they describe it as the way in which God prepared the world for Christianity. When I was last at Stratford-on-Avon, I called the attention of some friends to the design evident in Shakespeare having been born quite close to the house in which tickets were sold to visitors to view his birthplace.

Jesus the Chameleon.

I have been reading a book* which narrowly escapes being a first class work, and falls short of being that only because it is vitiated by the fallacy just noted. *The making of the Christian Mind*, is quite an attractive title, and the ground plan, that of

* *The Making of the Christian Mind*, by G. G. Atkins, D.D., L.H.D. Heinemann, 8s. 6d.

showing the existing frame of mind which goes by the name of Christian, arising in connexion with the varying environments of the past two thousand years is also a good one. Most of the influences that helped to bring into being the existing type of Christian mind are noted, although, as usual, the direct and indirect influence of a distinct rejection of Christianity during the past two centuries is either neglected or noted only inferentially. But where actual Free-thinkers deal with this aspect very gingerly, one ought not to be surprised if professed Christians follow their example.

Dr. Atkins' besetting fault is two-fold. First, he assumes that the development of Christianity involves the working out of some divine purpose, and secondly, that the making of the Christian mind is the "rediscovery of the mind of Christ." The first is merely another example of the fallacy noted above. The only reason anyone has for saying that the things that have occurred is part of the purpose of God, is that they have happened. But this conclusion is not based upon an examination of results and a knowledge that things might have been other than they are, but upon the previous belief that there is a God who has arranged things. So that when we are referred to the conclusion as the warranty for the assumption, we discover that the conclusion itself flows from the assumption. The second statement, that the making of the Christian mind has meant the "rediscovery of the mind of Christ" is, on Dr. Atkins' own showing, absurd. Christian history might with much greater truth be called the making of a mind for Christ, for that is really what has happened. What likeness is there between the Jesus who believed in devils, who looked to legions of angels for help, if necessary, who expected the end of the world, and who plainly intended to leave "worldly" affairs outside the scope of religious concern, with the Jesus who has, as Dr. Atkins points out, become a humanitarian worker for social reform? The mind of Christ means whatever anyone cares to make it; in practice it has meant reading into the teachings of Christ just what each generation of Christians believed to be right, or to be in harmony with the tendency of the moment.

Civilization and Christianity.

Dr. Atkins sees in the humanitarianism of modern thought a return to the mind of Christ; but, to one who reads his work with a scientific conception of the course of history, and of the meaning of comparative mythology, the humanism of the later centuries of European history furnishes a strong instance of the manner in which the Christian religion was conquered and civilized—I use that word in its full sense—by social forces which in the end would not be denied. Dr. Atkins admits that "the Church

was born in the confidence of the resurrection of its Lord. This was for the devout, not only the assurance of his victory over death and the grave, but their own as well. The earthly life was weary and full of peril and, at best, a prelude to the joys of eternity." What kind of social salvation was there promised in an outlook of this kind? There is no question whatever that to the earliest generations of Christians, the last thing that was looked for or hoped for was social regeneration. They expected the return of Jesus, and with that the end of the world. It was only when experience proved the falsity of the belief that the church, because it had assumed control, was compelled to modify its teachings and to lay its plans with more "worldly" or secular ends in view. And that principle runs right through Christian history. A Church that had kept to the teaching of the approaching end of the world, or that had refused to modify its ascetic doctrine would have long since disappeared from human society. Such anti-social teachings may do very well for a select few who are protected by society from their full consequences, but they become impossible when applied to a sufficiently large number.

Incidentally Dr. Atkins does really show the process at work. Take the following passage:—

Christianity was, from the first, in competition with religions whose rituals were rich in colour and action. An initiation into the mysteries of Isis or Osiris lacks nothing to impress the initiate. He fasted and sorrowed, and marched in star-lit processions over flower-strewn roads, to the chanting of hymns and music of flutes. He commemorated the natal days of his gods. He had his matins, his litanies, and vespers. The Christian Church could offer no less.

It did not offer less; it offered the people the old things under new names, and Dr. Atkins is unconsciously, in this and in similar passages, showing how Christianity arose as a synthesis of numerous religious beliefs and practices, all of which were in existence long before the Christian Church, as such, was heard of. But the main point is that the student is able to see the Christian religion coming into existence as other historic phenomena can be seen coming into existence. Once in being, it can also be seen subject to the same modifying social and intellectual systems and institutions. Christianity, having achieved success as a consequence of the break up of the Roman Empire, and using that success, not as an occasion for socially regenerating the ancient civilization, but as a means of perpetuating anti-social and wholly unscientific ideas, used its power to suppress freedom and sanity of thought. Europe had to wait for the Renaissance with its frankly pagan outlook, and its rediscovery of the art and literature of antiquity, and for the influence of the civilized Mohammedan world for a fresh movement of development. So also with the later scientific developments, right up to the era of the pronouncement of the theory of evolution. In no instance it is possible to trace the direct or indirect influence from Christianity. In every case the impulse towards betterment can be seen coming from without, even though the men who worked might do it under the name of Christianity. New movements are apt to clothe themselves in old thought-form, much as we are all forced to use the language of those from whom we are descended.

* * *

Loss and Gain.

A perception of a more rational view of the facts is evidenced in the following passage:—

Any social growth has, of course, such deep and tangled rootings as to make it impossible to follow any one single formative force through, without allowing for the give and take of other influences.

One's interpretation of history depends a good deal upon what one sets out to find. The historian who believes Christianity to have been the one humanizing and controlling influence between the fall of the Roman Empire and the Reformation can make out a sufficiently good case; but he will have to deal with facts fairly, and debit official Christianity with a good deal which was positively wrong, as well as crediting it with a very great deal which was positively right.

It may be taken that the author's assumption of a primitive form of Christianity which was brotherly—in the social and not merely in the religious sense, from which later Christianity departed, to be brought back again in our own time—belongs to this vice of setting out to find facts that will fit in with preconceived views, instead of allowing the facts to suggest their own explanation. He suggests that the first Christians were charitable, mutually sympathetic, and "upheld the simplicities and tenderness of life," when, as a matter of fact the first glimpse we have of Christians they were quarrelsome, uncharitable, and thought but little of either domestic or social ties. One can see this in even the pages of the New Testament itself. As a matter of fact Christians are to-day less vindictive, and more charitable than they have ever been, and this is plainly due to the controlling influence of secular civilization.

Dr. Atkins attributes the intolerance of Christianity to the fight Christianity sustained against Paganism. The explanation is quite inadequate. It leaves out of sight the influence of the doctrine of exclusive salvation, the revival of the brutalizing doctrine of eternal damnation, with its psychologic openings for the more beastly aspects of human nature under the guise of religious fervour; it does not explain why, under Christianity persecution was more brutal than it had ever been in the history of the world. Surely, the least we could have expected from so gentle a religion is that it would have toned down intolerance and brutality and not intensified it. Such peculiar statements are the more regrettable, because, as I have said, Dr. Atkins' book is planned on really sound lines; and if the performance is not equal to the programme, the author has the merit of suggesting to the informed reader the means of correcting many exaggerations and shortcomings.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

Gipsy Rovers.

OH! the shining splendour of sky and sea,
And the wide blue air around;
The stars at night for a canopy
And a bed on the mossy ground;
Then a long white road on which to fare,
Through the daisied fields with the leaves unfurled—
Life gay and free for you and me,
As we wander the wide, wide world!
Oh! for baubles and bells and transient things
Men barter their birthright true;
But the restless whirring of insect wings
Is enough for me and you;
For wealth of towns is an empty boast,
With a price that at last each worldling pays,
While love, without rift is the Gipsy's gift,
When the blood is a-dance with praise!
So give me the flame of the sunset sky,
And a rose from the wayside hedge;
The wind through the willows wand'ring by,
As we camp by the river's edge:
Then a-foot once more on the Open Road,
From the hush of dawn to the evening fire—
As the years speed by, until you and I,
Shall make our camp,
With the moon for lamp,
In the Land of Our Heart's Desire!

J. M. STUART-YOUNG.

The Religious Road to Ruin.

"It should be the object of all reasonable people to be governed as little as possible."—*G. W. E. Russell.*

"The object of science is to co-ordinate our experiences and to bring them into a logical system."

Einstein.

SINCE the Salvation Army was patronized by Royalty, it has been treated with greater respect by the newspaper editors, who are nothing if not snobbish. Hence it is not surprising to find that leader-writers now refer to the Salvation Army as an institution rather than as a freak-religion. Even the "Army" leaders are permitted to air their views in the columns of the press, and, on a quiet day, when there are no murders and no society divorce cases to report, they may share a page with the theatrical critic, the ladies' dress expert, or tales for the toddlers.

On such an occasion, in the lull following the General Election, the new head of the Salvation Army, Mr. Edward J. Higgins, aired his views in a London newspaper on the present condition of the Christian Religion, which he considers is slumping in value. Being still in the soul-saving business, and also believing that there is still money in that trade, he is not unduly pessimistic. But what he has to say is really interesting, for he is much franker than most clergymen, who are as slippery as politicians, and not nearly so polite.

Mr. Higgins says there is far less interest than formerly in organized Christianity in Britain to-day, and indeed in most Western lands. This is evidenced by such distressing facts as:—

1. The Secularization of Sunday.
2. The decline of public worship.
3. The shrinkage of Church membership.
4. The decrease in Sunday school scholars.
5. The shortage of clergy.

So far so good, but Mr. Higgins must dip his brush in crimson lake, and refer to the feverish pursuit of exciting pleasures, and the increase in the number of crimes and suicides. Why is it that clergymen almost invariably want to gild refined gold, and are so anxious to paint the lily? English people still take their pleasures as sadly as they did when Froissart made a note of it, and they are very much more sober. The most popular form of amusement to-day is that of the cinema-show, and the audiences are far less rowdy than the worshippers at any Salvation Army meeting. As for crimes of violence, these have always followed wars, and it was only to be expected after an upheaval which involved half the world, which Mr. Higgins might care to remember had experienced the blessings of the Christian Religion for many centuries.

Having explained that the Christian Religion is in a parlous state, Mr. Higgins turns a somersault, and adds:—

No one can question the fact that, however slowly, the principles and teaching of Jesus Christ are beginning in some measure to permeate our international and social relations. Men are beginning to recognize that, as Bernard Shaw has said, the social teachings of Jesus are not only good sense but sound economics.

What does Mr. Higgins really mean? If Christ's alleged teachings are permeating modern life, how is it that the churches and chapels are half-empty, that Sunday is no longer a sacred day, and that Mr. Higgins is compelled to deplore the decline of religion? As for our international relations, the despatch of troops and gunboats to China, and other displays of the mailed fist, do not appear to deserve the commendation of Mr. Higgins, or even Mr. Bernard Shaw. Really, the "General" of the Salvation Army

should sometimes glance at the newspapers, and he might do worse than read Shaw's books instead of quoting a part of a sentence torn from its context.

Mr. Higgins is more cultured than the first "general" of the Salvation Army. In the course of a short article he quotes Browning, Shaw, and "Saint Ignatius." A young curate, fresh from Oxford or Cambridge, could not do it better. It only shows that as the Salvation Army becomes "respectable" it is as indistinguishable from other Nonconformist bodies as margarine from butter. It is all very different from the blood-and-thunder days of his predecessor, where worshippers were invited to flee from the wrath to come, and hell was spelt with a capital letter, and aspirated accordingly.

According to Mr. Higgins, the road to religious certitude is only to be gained by discipleship and obedience. Just so! Unfortunately, forty thousand other priests say the same thing, and they belong to a hundred denominations. The Salvation Army is no more likely to succeed when so many have failed. Mr. Higgins is as likely to revive the Christian Religion as is the Bishop of London to persuade the pavement artists of his diocese to unite with him in a prayer for rain.

Christ's teachings are permeating modern life, declares Mr. Higgins. In almost the same breath, he also asserts that the disregard for religion by the nation is reflected in the general breaking down of moral standards. This method of Brother Higgins has its drawbacks, for it drives his readers to the mood of Davy Jones, "a friend dreaded by marines." Indeed, being instructed citizens of an educated nation, readers know that "General" Higgins' observations, like Rudolphe's, in Gautier's story, lack common sense, though, like Rudolphe's they make up for the deficiency by the most brilliant qualities.

What is it that Brother Higgins wants? Does he sigh for the actual return of the ages of Faith. We prefer the comparative freedom of our own day. There is no Star Chamber to fine, pillory, lop the hands, slit the noses, and cut off the ears of a Stubbes, a Paine, or a Leighton, citizens misguided enough to publish liberal opinions. Tramps are no longer treated with the resources of civilization familiar to Catholic England. In those times, when the Government did not like the opinions of an author it imprisoned, fined, starved, whipped, pilloried, and mutilated him. "The man died in our hands," says one of the documents describing the treatment of an offender in those days. One needs not to be a specially educated citizen to understand that "General" Higgins' view is biased; is coloured, not plain. Conceivably, on reflection, and after meditation among the tombs, he may recognize that sobriety of judgment is not precisely the quality in which his peculiar genius shines.

A short time ago it might have been said with certitude that the Salvation Army and the Roman Catholic Church were the only two religious bodies in this country which represented Christianity. From the new general's address it is clear that the Salvation Army has left the field to Rome. Thus does time bring in its revenges. The first Salvation Army, if legend be true, was sold up and its managing director murdered. Two thousand years later another Salvation Army is threatened with a worse fate, for it is dying of respectability.

MIMNERMUS.

Reason and ignorance, the opposite to each other, influence the great bulk of mankind. If either of these can be rendered sufficiently extensive in a country, the machinery of government goes easily on. Reason obeys itself; and ignorance submits to whatever is dictated to it.—*Thomas Paine "The Rights of Man."*

A Candid Diplomatist.

EVERY year sees the issue of one, or more, Memoirs, or Reminiscences of some famous man who has played a part in the public life of the nation. It may be as a Minister in Parliament, an Ambassador abroad, or other service of the State.

Many years ago, when we were young and inexperienced, and had more faith in these great men, who so nobly sacrificed themselves to the service of the State for a few thousands a year, we used to think that the publication of these Memoirs would throw some much needed light upon what went on behind the scenes during the crises in which these people played a prominent part. But we invariably found that there was rather less to be learned from these works than had appeared in the public press at the time.

The only Memoirs that are worth reading, for this purpose, are those that have not been written with an eye to publication, but for the writer's own convenience or recreation, and have come to light many years after his death. It is to the author of one of these latter that we have given the name of "A Candid Diplomatist." The book, which has recently been published (Constable, 18s.) is entitled: *Sir Edmund Hornsby: An Autobiography*. And the title page bears a quotation from Morley: "Reminiscences cease to be Reminiscences when they are much weeded and pruned."

These reminiscences, it is very evident, have not been pruned. In a "Biographical note," Sir Edmund's daughter tells us that this autobiography has been put aside for many years, but it was decided to publish it as a record "of an older civilization, both in Europe and the East, than we shall ever know." Sir Edmund himself says that he wrote the book for the sake of his family. He often felt that he would like to have known more about his parents, and he thought his children, in their turn, would have a similar curiosity concerning himself.

And the book is highly interesting. There is nothing high-brow or stilted about it, and, unlike most Victorian books, nothing prudish. The book really reads as if he was talking to the family circle, telling of his youthful adventures among the Court ladies of Portugal and Spain; among whom he appears to have been a prime favourite, and later, of his adventures in Turkey, of the violent anger which the great "Ehchi" vented upon him, when he presented himself at our embassy at Constantinople, where he had been sent on a special mission by our Government. Also of what Lord Palmerston said to him about the missionaries. How, at a horse race at Constantinople, the horse run by the Sultan's son, Prince Murad, beating the Sultan's horse by coming in first, the Sultan promptly ordered him to be arrested! Upon another occasion, when Sir Edmund was acting as judge—that official being taken ill—he gave the Sultan's horse second place. His Majesty declared that his horse was the winner, and insisted that the verdict should be altered, and upon refusal, and Sir Edmund leaving the box, the Sultan appointed another judge, and ordered the race to be run again, when his horse came in third.

Of the almost unbelievable state of financial corruption in Turkey, he gives several examples. Sir Edmund was sent out there to take charge of the five million pounds loan granted to Turkey, and to see that it reached its proper destination, and not be pouched by the Turkish officials. He had all his work cut out. For instance, hearing that scurvy had broken out among the Turkish troops at Eupatoria, he bought and freighted two large ships with fresh

vegetables, and sent them off in charge of Turkish officers. Later on, when dining out, he overheard one French officer telling another, how he had been able to buy these very vegetables; the officers had sold them and pocketed the money! Sir Edmund went after them, brought six of them back to Constantinople, and, after some persistence had them cashiered. Upon another occasion, an immense amount of forged Turkish Treasury Notes were discovered in a large iron-bound chest. Inquiries disclosed the fact that an immense number had been put into circulation, many had passed through the Treasury, none had been repudiated as false: "It was, to my mind, clear," says Sir Edmund, "that the false issue had been made with the connivance of officials." And further: "My belief is that the Government recouped their losses by quietly permitting the circulation of the notes thus discovered." Fancy, if you can, our Treasury officials flooding the country with forged notes.

Associated with him in finance was his French colleague, Cardrossi. Sir Edmund disposed of the money, while Cardrossi did all the bookkeeping and kept the accounts: "God knows what would have become of the five millions if he had not done so." says Sir Edmund; and observes: "I do not believe that more than half a million was misapplied. How that went I know not." One bag which should have held £20,000 in gold, was full of copper coins.

But the greatest bane of his life was the missionary. He observes: "I had, of course—for what official has not—a great deal of trouble with our Protestant missionaries." He says that altogether he must have had to do with thousands of missionaries, male and female, and he declares that, with a few exceptions who are engaged in translations and literary work: "They are, next to habitual criminals, the most troublesome people to deal with in the world." Sir Edmund says that he ought really "to write a book devoted to my experiences of 'Missionary Mischief'; but I cannot really afford the time." Besides, the bare recollection of the irritation and worry they caused him would infallibly bring to a crisis the dis-ease heart he is said to be suffering from. He gives, as a sample, a case that happened at Constantinople:—

One day the Turkish Minister of Police sent me up a gigantic poster, which some agent had torn down off the walls of St. Sophia, informing the Mussulman community that on a certain day, two English missionaries would, from the steps of the Mosque, denounce Mahomet as an imposter. His Excellency begged me to take steps to prevent this startling mode of conversion, saying that he would not be responsible for the lives of the two missionaries, or, indeed, for the lives of any Protestants in the neighbourhood. I sent for the two gentlemen. One was a personal friend of my own, and blessed with a wife and two daughters; the other, a converted Jew, who afterwards was the main cause of the Abyssinian War. On my remonstrating with them, they told me that they had a "call" to denounce the Prophet, that Mahomet was an imposter, that truth, preaching and argument in foreign chapels was of no avail, and that their "Master" would protect them. My eloquence was wasted, and finally I pleaded not a "call," but a "positive order," to prevent the offering of any insult to the religion of the country, and that, although I had no serious objection to their getting their heads broken (which indeed I had not), I had a particular objection to getting mine broken, or to risking the breaking of the heads of other persons who, whatever their opinions concerning "Mahomet," had the good sense to keep them to themselves. All my eloquence was useless. My orders, they said, could not prevail against the orders of their Master, etc., and they rose to leave me. I told them that I would

not allow them to leave in their then exalted frame of mind, but should hold them to bail in the sum of £500 each, and two sureties in the sum of £250 each, the alternative being confinement in Her Majesty's gaol until they climbed down. And to gaol they went; but soon, on two good and influential sureties presenting themselves, and on their entering into the required personal recognisances, they were released. All this was "nuts" for Exeter Hall, which went frantic for at least a month. (Sir Edmund Hornby: *An Autobiography*. pp. 125-6.)

If this case were an isolated case, says Sir Edmund, he would not have recorded it, "but it was only one of a hundred," and he gives others from his experiences in China.

W. MANN.

(To be concluded.)

Ferns---Past and Present.

THE green and graceful fern is ever regarded as a thing of beauty. The feathery fronds of our popular ferns, and the mysterious mode of the plant's reproduction have excited the imagination of the pastoral population from prehistoric times. The fern therefore plays its part in native folklore, and many are the quaint beliefs concerning it.

Some species of ferns were credited with the power to open locks. It is alleged that if on the night of St. John's Eve (June 24), one maintained solitary vigil by night, good fairies might appear and reward the watcher with a bag of gold. Another widespread superstition is that fern seed, properly gathered, renders its possessor invisible to mortal sight. Another old wives' tale narrates that as the twilight deepens on the Eve of St. John, the fern unfolds a small blue blossom which quickly fades, and the rapidly ripening seed must be caught in a white cloth. Fern "seed" was long popular as a "wish seed," which enabled its lucky owner to obtain his greatest desires.

Animal pedigrees such as those of the elephant, camel, and horse, have been determined in clear and conclusive detail from their fossil remains. These provide potent proof of the truth of organic evolution. And although scientific knowledge of vegetable development is less complete, all the positive evidence available plainly supports the doctrine of evolution.

The fossil pedigree of the plants dates back through unspeakable periods of time. The family of ferns is of extreme antiquity, and as a whole, traces its ancestry to times as remote as any plant group now extant.

What were long regarded as true ferns left their impress on rocks of Silurian age, but it is now known that these petrifications are the remains of plants related to the ferns. In the later Carboniferous deposits the existence of real ferns is clearly demonstrated by fossils, which when sliced to thin sections and microscopically tested "reveal the fern-type structure with marvellous completeness." Fine photographs and drawings of these may be studied in the publications of Scott, Seward, Gwynne-Vaughan, and other eminent pteridologists.

Fossil remains, which superficially display all the recognized features of the fern family were shown by the researches of the late Prof. Williamson to represent a more generalized type. Plant remains from the Coal measures formerly ranked as ferns were proved to differ in structural arrangement from those of any known fern. Many of these were shown to represent plants of a higher organization, provided with fern-like foliage, but producing seeds, or something akin to seeds, which the spore-bearing fern never does. These

fossils are now minutely examined, for they apparently link closely together the previously distinctly separated cryptogams—those plants whose reproductive organs are concealed, or not plainly visible such as ferns and lichens—and phanerogams, whose sexual organs assume the form of floral structures. These intermediate fernlike forms have been given the general name of Pteridosperms, a term, which in the words of Prof. Seward, "express the combination of fern-like features with one of the distinguishing attributes of the higher plants, namely the possession of seeds."

This unexpected discovery produced a revolution in the botanical world, and led to a closer scrutiny of the fossil fern-like vegetation, with the result that numerous Carboniferous "ferns" were shown to be doubtful. Still, although many fossils were proved to belong to an intermediate order; the true ferns were undoubtedly well established in the period which witnessed the deposition of our chief coal measures. As a matter of fact, in the lower Carboniferous limestone strata at Petteycur, in Scotland, are found the most ancient fern fossils so far recovered by science.

The present geographical distribution of fern-life illumines the problem of the relative antiquity of various genera and species. The bracken fern is a hardy and widespread plant. It flourishes exceedingly in Europe, the Malay Region, Tasmania, and many other places widely apart. This indicates its easy adaptability to contemporary conditions, and it appears to be of modern evolution. Yet, it is found associated with rare and disappearing forms. Prof. Seward states, in his charming work, *Links with the Past in the Plant World*, that "On Mount Ophir, in the Malay Peninsula, the cosmopolitan bracken occurs in company with the two genera, *Matonia* and *Dipteris*, ferns which are among the most striking examples of links with a remote past, and have a restricted geographical range. With *Osmunda regalis*, the Royal fern, the bracken is conspicuous in the marsh vegetation of the Bermudas; it flourishes in the Atlas Mountains, in the Canary Islands, in Abyssinia, on Mount Kenia, in British East Africa, in the Himalayas, in Persia and China, in New Zealand, and is, in fact, generally distributed in the tropics, as also in both the north and south temperate zones."

The British Royal Fern also enjoys a far-flung habitat. Its range extends from Northern Asia to North America. It flourishes in the forests of Siberia, and thrives in tropical regions, and reaches to Cape Colony and Southern India. This fern is now comparatively rare in Britain, but the rock records, and the submerged forest beds which encircle our shores testify to its former abundance in our island home.

The Royal Fern is a scion of an ancient and once important family now reduced to two genera, *Osmunda* and *Todea*.

The ever-abundant bracken, is apparently a comparatively recent species, now in the prime of life. There are, however, various reasons for inferring that *Osmunda* and *Todea* are ancient forms. Their reproductive cells are very poorly adapted to present-day competition in the floral realm.

The *Osmunda* genera date back as far as the Permian age. Dr. Kidson and Prof. Gwynne-Vaughan have demonstrated certain anatomical peculiarities in remarkably well preserved fossil fern-stems from Permian deposits in Russia which prove close affinities with modern members of the group.

In the later Jurassic fossil floral beds in Yorkshire and elsewhere, fertile fern-fronds, capsules and spores have been traced which are almost identical with those of the living *Osmunda*. There are various reasons for thinking that the Royal Fern and other members of

the family boast a line of descent which reaches back further into the remote past than any other extant fern.

Evidences of progressive evolution are afforded by the higher Carboniferous strata, and in more recent rocks. Fossils of a distinctly advanced type abound. Some of these petrified remains are those of minute species, while others are majestic plants such as the tree ferns of New Zealand and Ceylon. During the vast periods of time through which our planet has passed, multitudinous forms of ferns have developed and passed through their proud centuries of power, until they succumbed in the struggle, leaving nothing but their fossil record behind.

Fossil forests have from time to time been discovered in our coal fields. Vegetation buried millions of years ago was brought to light at the Parkfield Colliery, near Wolverhampton, in 1844. In the words of Prof. Geddes: "In the space of about one-fourth of an acre appeared the stumps of seventy-three trees with their roots attached. The trunks, broken off close to the roots, were lying prostrate in every direction, often crossing each other. One of them measured 15, another 30 feet in length, but they were generally shorter. They were invariably converted into coal, and flattened to the thickness of one or two inches." Another fossil forest was discovered near Glasgow in 1887.

Some fern genera of restricted distribution survive from hoary antiquity. Juan Fernandez is an island situated 420 miles from the coast of Chili. There, the stranded Alexander Selkirk, the original of Robinson Crusoe, was for four years monarch of all he surveyed. This small island is the home of forty species of ferns, eight of which are entirely unknown elsewhere. One of these elegant forms is plainly related to fern species which flourished in remote Jurassic times. "We have," declares Prof. Seward, "satisfactory grounds for the assertion that the Juan Fernandez fern affords a striking confirmation of the truth of Darwin's dictum that 'Rarity, as geology tells us, is the precursor of extinction.' In this remote oceanic island, for reasons which we cannot explain, there lingers an isolated type which belongs to another age."

Wallace, in his wanderings in the Malay Archipelago, ascended Mount Ophir, where he saw "groves of those splendid ferns, *Dipteris Horsfieldii* and *Matonia pectinalata*, which bear large spreading fronds on slender stems, 6 or 8 feet high."

The *Matonia* genus forms another instance of survival from a dim past. These ferns are strictly confined to the Malay region, but their fossils prove that they formerly enjoyed a far wider distribution.

Fern fossils closely related to the *Matonia* occur in the Jurassic rocks of Yorkshire. The remains of extinct members of the same family have also been discovered in England. So far as is at present known, the extant species of *Matonia* are the remnants of a family which in Jurassic times occupied a large European area, and probably extended to the New World.

Fossil fragments of ferns of the *Dipteris* type discovered in rocks of the Secondary or Mesozoic Period indicate its earlier abundance in several parts of the world, where it has long since disappeared. Remains are recorded in the rocks of Europe, America, and Tonkin. During later ages, this type of fern flourished throughout the Northern Hemisphere. Impressions of fern fronds resembling those of *Dipteris* may be seen in the Jurassic deposits on the Yorkshire Coast, and in slightly later rocks on the Sutherland Shore.

T. F. PALMER.

Nature seems to exist for the excellent. The world is upheld by the veracity of good men: they make the earth wholesome.—Emerson, "Uses of Great Men."

The Tactics of the Modern Sophist.

(Continued from page 357.)

IN the days of my youth I once took part in making up a Guy Fawkes. It was rare fun. We spent a deal of time upon his face and head-gear; but his nose received more attention than any other part of his anatomy. When he was fully garbed he was truly a risible object. I fancy even the birds had a laugh. By the bye, few people seem to be aware that it was religion, the Christian religion, that was at the bottom responsible for the crime he had planned to commit. His Catholic zeal made him a willing tool in the hands of the plotting Jesuits.

Now, however cruelly grotesque was that scarecrow we built of that brave fellow who, rather than betray his inciters, allowed himself to be tortured as if by savages, before he was hanged and burnt, it is not one whit more grotesque or untruthful than Mr. Joad's caricature of Materialism. But for one sentence the whole is a fantastic guy from first to last. The very substance out of which he builds his effigy is not the "matter" of the Materialist. The proverbial difference between cheese and chalk is a contrast hardly strong enough. The "matter" of the Materialist is a "living" thing—the embodiment, the receptacle, the fountain head of energy—whereas that with which Mr. Joad builds his guy is as dead as a door nail, a something of doubtful existence, and apparently quite inert. As we have seen Mr. Joad keeps the power that energizes the whole of this world completely out of sight, he pursues the same policy in his presentation of Materialism. He speaks of "bits of matter" as if they were dead leaves blown about by the wind, or pebbles jostling each other on the sea shore. He not only empties matter of all energy, but treats mind as an entity which he endows with energy—of the magical order, of course.

Let us leave implications and attend to what is overt. On page ten he says, "The Materialist maintains that we do not require to postulate the existence of anything additional to the nervous system and the brain to account for our mental and emotional life."

There is nothing of the Guy in that sentence, it is a correct description of the Materialist. But let us see what becomes of it. A few lines further on it is manipulated thus "Let us assume provisionally the first view (given in the above quotation) is correct. The mind then is the brain, or, as some Materialists put it, a function of the brain"! It would be a piece of valuable information to get the name of just one Materialist who said that "the mind is the brain."

According to Mr. Joad's way of putting it, especially with the aid of the word "some" (a delightful sophistic touch), the bulk of Materialists have said so. Every Materialist I know of would repudiate such an ascription with scorn, and denounce it as a gross libel. On page nineteen he repeats this libel: "If Materialism is correct, mind as we have seen, is part of (or a function of) the brain."

The correct theory of Materialism is stowed away snugly in a bracket, while the daring untruth forms the sentence. Only an arrant sophist would ever express it in that manner. His object appears to be, make the Materialist a Guy sufficiently hideous to excite enough laughter to demolish it.

Before commenting upon his deliverance about Nature "creating something out of nothing," I wish to recapitulate his several suppressions and their effects:—

(1) The first we took notice of was his suppression of the animal mind. Indeed, he keeps the animal

world clean out of sight, so that the origin and nature of mentality as determined by the necessities of life, should not enter our thoughts at all. Hence Mr. Joad's sophistic meanderings.

(2 and 3) We next drew attention to how he suppresses the correlated existences—the sense-organs and natural energy—the object obviously being to cut away the ground from under the Materialist's feet. For energy and the sense-organs are the very *raison d'être* of his theory. If Mr. Joad therefore did not keep them entirely out of sight, he would be practising his art badly.

(4) One more suppression must be added to the list. Mr. Joad's wonderfully conceived situation of sitting in a chair after dinner and thinking about a lecture he was to deliver, has rivalled in sublimity Jumbo's escapade down the hill-side. The object of this rare piece of conception is to prove that the poor Materialist is in a real quandary in respect to "foresight and expectation." But before he could do that with any degree of plausibility he had to suppress the too well known fact that animals, including the human animal, possess such a thing as *Memory*!—a faculty to retain and store past experience. By suppressing this capacity he gave that metaphysical deity of his—the mind—a chance to do something. Materialists, however, through happening to possess a memory can "foresee and expect" without the aid of his deity quite as well as Mr. Joad can with it.

KERIDON.

(To be concluded.)

Acid Drops.

We fancy that Mussolini will not find his alliance with the Pope quite all honey. Evidently he has had to assure his followers that the Church will not exercise rights over the Italian people which should be exercised by the State alone. And the Pope is very much displeased with the statement of the Dictator, that if the Christian religion had not transferred its headquarters to Rome, "it would have flickered out like any other religious sect which flourished in Palestine." This is almost a commonplace, but is one that the Christian Church—Catholic or Protestant—cannot admit. The talk of Christianity conquering through the mythical lovable character of Jesus is so much eye-wash, suitable only for Sunday schools and Christian Evidence at its meetings. In every case Christianity established itself by force and maintained itself by force. Constantine took up with Christianity because it suited his political plans. Without the backing of the State, Christianity would have stood about the same chance of surviving in Europe, as would an ice-block in the midst of the Christian hell.

Mr. Arnold Lupton told a Unitarian meeting at Manchester, that Christianity in this country was for the most part a "blasphemous superstition." We are not greatly impressed by such a statement, since it usually means no more than that the speaker does not agree with the superstition taught, but has a pet superstition of his own. Hobbes' definition of religion as superstition allowed, and of superstition as religion not allowed, still stands. Mr. Lupton says the time is now at hand to get "a sound Christian religion in England." We have heard of that before, and it generally results in a religion that is all sound. After all the only Christianity the world has ever known is superstition, and if all this superstition is taken out of Christianity there is nothing left to quarrel about.

Perhaps by accident, and perhaps to give an air of impartiality, the *Daily News* publishes a letter on the controversy of "Science and Faith." It does show at least that there are thoughtful individuals about—we give it in full:—

Sir,—If Professor Iddington has been correctly re-

ported, he has conceded nearly all that the Materialist requires. He is reported as saying: "Our assurance of God is the consciousness of a relation rather than a flawless proof of existence." Precisely! A subjective impression, which is exactly what the Materialist says it is.—J. C. PRIOR.

It is about time that the Pope was informed of the prospective "goings on" at Wimbledon. The women players will discard stockings and bare legs will be in evidence. Perhaps the holy influences are too busy getting their own schools on the rates to notice this alarming phenomenon of freedom—word anathema to the medieval-minded.

Pfarrer Martin Maczyrski, of Berlin, a minister of what was formerly the State Church in Germany, says that whereas before 1918, religious instruction was compulsory in all day schools, a large number of these schools are now secularized. They provide now only a course of general moral teaching. Consequently, says this minister, the whole task of imparting the facts concerning the Christian religion is falling to the Church. Well, there's one advantage in this. The cost of religious instruction now falls on people who want it taught, instead of on, as formerly, the generality of ratepayers.

The Bishop of Bath and Wells, addressing some Church of England school teachers, says: "It doesn't matter much what is learned and taught, so long as it is well learned and well taught." The Bishop, you note, hasn't the faintest notion that real education is something which equips the child with ability to think for itself. What manner of use to society are persons who have merely been well taught a conglomeration of scholastic facts? That type of school product may suit the convenience of priests. But the welfare of the State is more important than that of the Church.

A religious weekly congratulates the thirty-seven Methodist candidates who were successful in the election, and adds that "the new Members bring various gifts of a high order to the service of the House, and will contribute much to its tone and moral stability." This, we are convinced, was said in no mood of self-righteousness, but with deep consciousness of Christian unworthiness and full-blown humility.

A carefully prepared advertising campaign, says the American Consul-General in London, will produce immediate results, if the product is really good. The clever gents who engineered the newspaper campaign for boosting religion might make a note of the Consul-General's "if." In the light of it, meagre results are easier accounted for.

A reader of the *Daily Mirror* has been "pulling the leg" of a bishop:—

With all due respect to the Bishop of London, I feel sure that all your readers will agree with me that "the most immoral play ever produced in London" or the provinces is "Punch and Judy."

The times have indeed changed for the worse, when the moral indignation of a bishop—a very special pet of the Lord—excites laughter and "leg-pulling." Let us hope that the coming revival of religion will affect a change for the better.

The Wesleyan Missionary Society tells the world that the Society received from home circuits £207,653, and from circuits abroad £185,442 last year. How true it is that "mugs" and their money are easily separated! Now just suppose that all this cash had been intelligently laid out on productive employment for needy Englishmen . . .

M. André Maurois says that fiction is necessary because, to some extent, one's ordinary life lacks strong emotions as compared with the savage existence of the past. Maybe, this explains why there is so much fiction running spare, in places where people who specialise in primitive fears and emotions assemble together to praise the Lord Most High.

A publisher has just put forth *Knowing God*, by "An Unknown Christian." A more accurate title would have been: *The Unknown God*, by "A Knowing Christian."

According to *Everyman*, the Treasury Department at Washington has made the discovery that *Candide* is an obscene book, and the circulation of it has been stopped. As far as Voltaire is concerned, he made the mistake of not inventing something to "lick creation"—this would have assured him a goddamn reception in America. On the lines of destroying a town at one blow, he would have been "the goods."

The *Methodist Recorder* tells the world that:—

The latest news of the King's condition produces a real and universal sense of relief which affords some indication of the shock of disappointment and anxiety the nation experienced when it read the announcement of His Majesty's relapse . . . When . . . a little later came the announcement of the postponement of the Thanksgiving Service to which everyone, even in the excitement of an election campaign, was looking forward with sincere gratitude, concerned deepened into grave apprehension, and the nation held its breath. But now it breathes more freely again. The King's symptoms, we are assured, are by no means unusual; and the doctors have the situation well in hand . . . We cherish the strong hope that the Thanksgiving Day will soon be celebrated with added cause to rejoicing and gratitude to God.

We gather that God, being dissatisfied with the quality of the nation's gratitude, decided to have his vote of thanks postponed. The only thing to do was to let the King become ill again, in order that the gratitude might grow greater. This was rather rough on the King. But Kings have to submit to the discomforts of exalted rank, they being, as the Prayer Book suggests, divinely appointed pieces on the Lord's chessboard.

At his job of supplying "Peeps at living Methodism," a reporter has been looking around Bournemouth. More correctly, we should say he has been prowling through the town to see what signs of Sunday enjoyment there are of which he can disapprove. The new Pavilion is a fine building, but some local inhabitants don't entirely approve of it. You see, it provides pleasure, and—what is devilishly sinful—it has a drinking-bar, which is "far too easy of access and far too crowded." Bournemouth, we learn, is gayer than it used to be. And our prowling friend dismally groans: "Let us hope it is a happier Bournemouth, also." Another fact depresses him. On Saturday night, in one paper, he saw ten columns or more of advertisements devoted to pleasure, and just half-a-column devoted to notices concerning the activities of various churches. What, he asks, is one to make of that? Well, one might say that the inhabitants and visitors of Bournemouth have obviously acquired a more wholesome notion about the way to enjoy life on the Sabbath.

To-day, says the Bishop of Middleton, the Church is suffering from mental indigestion. And the Bishop's cure is to turn the world into a learning world, which can only be done by making the Church a learning Church. Apparently, we gather from what the Bishop says, church supporters are not eager to learn. They are not receptive to nice new Modernist notions. So the Bishop tells them:—

Our Lord put in the forefront the friendly mind—a mind which is not only friendly in social intercourse, but is friendly also to ideas, and to differences of opinion, and welcomes the fact that we do not all think alike.

The New Testament reveals a gentle Jesus reviling and slandering religious opponents who dared to differ from him. This fact makes the Bishop's little romance none too easy a morsel for swallowing. For the Bishop's sake, it is a pity the Bible was made available in English.

The Rev. Dr. Albert Peel, Editor of *Congregational Quarterly*, writes in a religious weekly as follows:—

I do not think it is possible to exaggerate the importance of the next few years in the history of the Christian Church; they will, I

think, determine whether the Church, as we know it, is to live on into the future. In the main, people inside the churches show no real appreciation of the situation, of the seriousness of the challenge, or of the greatness of the opportunity. They are content to let the State give religious education, sometimes satisfactory, sometimes not, but they are not prepared to make any real sacrifice of time and money to provide it even for their own children. And religious education is the crux of the whole matter.

Apparently, religious fervour is not very warm even among regular attendants at church. The parsons will soon have to devote most of their energy to evangelizing their own congregations! As Mr. Peel says, the Churches must try to capture the children. When so many adult minds are unresponsive, the parsons' only hope is kidnapping adolescents. But even that hope is none too bright if the State persists in improving secular education. *Nil desperandum!*

The Archbishop of York is deeply interested in the new towns that are arising as a result of housing schemes. More accurately, we might say that he is professionally concerned about the best means of capturing for the Church the people who have migrated to the new areas. He has noted that the new houses are mostly occupied by newly married people "who are at a stage when they are apt to form new habits." Therefore, thinks his Grace, it is of the utmost importance that churches should be built to which people can attack themselves before their church-going habit is broken. And, of course, the most urgent point of all concerns the children. There is, at present, "no place for them to be gathered together for religious purposes." Quite so; the acquired habit of worshipping God is a delicate thing, and is sure to get snuffed out in competition with the habits of Sunday gardening, or motoring, or seaside visiting. If that is allowed to happen, all is lost! And the poor little children, with no place to be gathered together in for religious inoculation—what a shame! They may never know Jesus, nor make the acquaintance of the disinterested Archbishop of York. This is too deep for tears.

If open confession is good for the soul, some of the clergy should be getting into a better state of health. After telling us for so long that civilization was unthinkable without Christianity, some of our clerical guides are beginning to try a little franker speech. Thus, in a recent speech at Edinburgh, Dr. Hensley Henson is reported as saying:—

Broadly it is true that we have lived to see a time when Christianity was no longer the assumption of general civilized thought.

Christianity has not been an assumption of general civilized thought for a long time. All that happened was that publicists were afraid of giving offence if they did not pay lip-homage to Christianity, and so kept up the game of pretending that Christianity was essential to civilization. Now they are beginning to throw over even the pretence. One need only take up any half-dozen leading books on any branch of cultured thought to see what little Christianity has to do with the conclusions set forth. Perhaps Dr. Henson thinks that if he calls attention to this state of things it may frighten people into being more careful, and they will go on pretending for a little while longer. Real Christianity is little more than a jest to solid thinkers. It is still of use to politicians, but they have the votes of the belated church and chapel-goers to fish for.

The Rev. J. C. Hardwicke informs readers of the *London Evening News*, that "in a non-religious world, great art of every kind would evaporate. We should not only lose the power to write 'Lear,' or compose the Fifth Symphony, but we should lose the power of appreciating such things." What cheerful devils these parsons are when they see their jobs slipping from them! And yet we sometimes think that if only enough well-paid jobs were promised, quite a number of these parsonic gentry, who are so doleful about what will happen if the world gives up belief in ghosts and gods and goblins and other kinds of tomfoolery, would be ready to swear allegiance to the new order.

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.—W. Watson 10s.; Dan Jones, 10s.; L. Morris, 10s.; E. Wright (New Plymouth), 5s.; J. Peterson, £50.

L. MORRIS.—The aim of the Trustees of the *Freethinker* Endowment Trust is to secure a capital of £10,000 for investment. We are making no special appeal, but the Trust will remain open for subscriptions until that amount is reached. One of these days we are expecting someone to come along with all that is required.

E. WATSON (Aberdeen).—You must expect politicians to "hedge." It is the badge of the tribe. Now and then there are exceptions, but they never become very prominent. An electorate usually prefers flattery to honesty in those who ask for its votes.

W. C. GOULD (N.Z.).—The Editor thanks you for your kindly message. It is greatly appreciated. Messages to the same effect have come from all parts of the world.

R. W. BLUNT (Dunedin).—Thanks for subscription from new reader, and also for your warm appreciation of our work. We are glad to find you acting as agent for the *Freethinker*. We have many readers in New Zealand, and ought to have many more.

D.P.S.—Will act on suggestion. We were not at all disturbed; took it as it was meant. The promise to write some articles on philosophical questions must be taken as not too binding. It must depend upon what time we have. Our hands are always pretty full.

R. C. ASHWORTH.—Thanks. Have saved for later use.

R. MARWORTH.—We never yet met a man who felt too foolish to express an opinion about religion. Things that are set-atable make even the most foolish pause. But the ways of God are plain to the most stupid.

R. MARTIN.—Why on earth should we cultivate a need for God? We quite believe that we might succeed if we tried hard. So we might cultivate a taste for whisky. But is it worth while? Crutches are of no use to the sound.

J. J. VIPOND.—The feature common to Mussolini, a Soviet leader, and "Jix," is that of wishing to force the people into what each conceives to be the right way of life. More damage has been done by this method than any other with which we are acquainted. Books have been sent.

R. ATHERTON.—Next week.

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. R. H. Roselli, 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.

We are continually receiving requests from isolated individuals in various parts of the country as to the possibility of Freethought lectures or propaganda in their districts. We take this opportunity of saying, we once for all, but are not very sanguine on that head, that in any part of the country where local friends are willing to look after the necessary arrangements we shall be quite willing to do all we can to help, and the National Secular Society will see to it that the lecturer is forthcoming to do the work. But it is essential that someone on the spot shall lend a hand.

The *Osservatore Romano*, which is the official organ of the Vatican, backs up the American Cardinal who recently denounced Einstein's theory as being Atheistic. We do not imagine that the disapproval of the Vatican will upset Professor Einstein very much. The Papacy can, so far as he is concerned, only bark, its days of biting are past. But it is interesting as showing that the greatest Church of all is where it was. Not that we disagree with the opinion that Einstein's views really are Atheistic. But for that matter *all* science is Atheistic. So what are the poor churches to do?

The Rationalist Press Association has added two more shilling volumes to its "Thinker's Library"—John Stuart Mill's *Essay On Liberty*, and G. H. Wells' *Short History of the World*. Both books are sufficiently well-known to obviate the need for extended notice. At one shilling per volume they are wonderful value, and Mill's essay is particularly worth study at the present moment.

The Lord Chamberlain has forbidden the appearance of a play called "East of Eden." The ground of offence appears to be that Adam and Eve have a discussion as to where Cain's wife came from, and there is also some discussion about God. For the first, we assume it to be only natural that both Adam and Eve should be curious as to where their daughter-in-law came from, and as to God, well, it is never safe to talk too much about him. Once upon a time when morals did that something serious happened to God.

Rite.

The priest has a thousand lies,
And the dupe but one;
Yet the food of the crude priest dies
When the rites are done.

The mob has a thousand fears,
And the priest but one—
If the cloud of his ritual clears,
He, too, is done!

THOMAS WILLIAM LAMONT.

Spiritual Tipsters.

HAVING received, from time to time, various earnest communications from members of the sporting fraternity, one can measure their prophetic wisdom—or otherwise—by the quality of the unkind remarks they make regarding their brother-seers. When they begin “slanging the other fellow,” we may be well-advised in transferring our custom.

Not that you will fare any better at the hands of the rival. He, too, will strain an extensive vocabulary in the effort to point out that he is not as other men are, that his information is of the unimpeachable variety.

Therefore, if we must have tipsters, we may as well cling to the prophets we have rather than fly to the seers whose vision is just as limited.

According to newspaper report, the most Rev. Richard Downey, Archbishop of Liverpool, has been saying unkind things concerning his brother-tipsters. ‘The Spiritualists are really “no class.” They are not members of the old firm.’ They are neophytes at the business. Mere upstarts in the gentle art of telling a gaping world what the future holds for them.

But Dr. Downey is different. He has other sources of information. His firm has been in business for hundreds of years. It has agencies everywhere. It alone can give us “the goods.” Direct from the horse’s mouth, so to speak.

There’s nothing like a vast amount of self-assurance, when one takes up the tipsters’ profession. No use shilly-shallying, humming or hawing. Best to plump for certainties, or, as sporting parlance has it “dead certs.” Spiritual tipsters are good at these, for you have to be dead before you find it a certainty.

The average Roman Catholic must find the “spiritualistic” information most unsettling. Just when they have been assured by their mentors that they may risk all on a safe investment, absolutely guaranteed, these rival tipsters blurt out conflicting rumours. “Can’t stay the pace”; “Carries too much weight”; “gone a little lame”; “too soft for the course,” and so, on, with the consequence we are all at sixes and sevens. Nobody can be sure who is going to win the Purgatory Handicap, or the Paradise Selling Plate.

His Grace is to blame for the free use of sporting language. One must follow his worthy example when he talks of Spiritualists as tipsters for the next world. He knows, he knows a good thing when he sees it. Who knows but what he may himself, have “a bit on the favourite.”

Dr. Colvin, of Glasgow, too made some astonishing remarks at the same Conference—“The Catholic Young Men’s Society,” at Coventry. According to newspaper report he declared that, “excepting priests and medical men, the more people knew about the functions and control of sex, the less moral they became.”

Here is a topsy-turvy state of things. Why should priests and medical men be excepted? Are they differently constituted? Or have they other means of information like the confirmed tipster, which enables them to carry unscathed the burden of knowledge?

It has been said that “a little learning is a dangerous thing,” and everyday experience proves the truth of it. But this Doctor would go one better. Presumably if an increased knowledge of any subject is bad for the morals, it follows that a lesser knowledge would tend to betterment, until we arrived at the point of supreme bliss when we became entirely

ignorant. We had been told that “ignorance is sometimes bliss,” and we are proud to have it confirmed by a Catholic Doctor at Coventry.

Certain savage tribes seem to be unaware that reproduction is the direct consequence of the union of the sexes. Perhaps Dr. Colvin would like the mass of our people to be likewise charmingly unsophisticated. We would be moral because ignorant. That is the ideal for the mass of the people, or for Catholic young men. But, mark you, it is *not* the ideal for priests and doctors.

ALAN TYNDAL.

Religion: Folkways and Experience.

(Continued from page 363.)

RELIGIOUS experience is made up of sentiments. The folkways are their germs. The Mores instigated them. This is the social start and psychic standing of the religious experience. Folkways are social processes. Their individual psychic counterparts are sentiments. These special social sentiments are collective representations.⁴² “Collective representations may be recognized by the following signs. They are common to the members of a given social group; they are transmitted from one generation to another within it; they impress themselves upon its individual members and awaken in them sentiments of respect, fear, adoration, and so on, according to the circumstances of the case. Their existence does not depend on the individual. This is . . . because they present themselves in aspects which cannot be accounted for by considering individuals merely as such . . . Collective representations have their own laws.” They arise whenever “mental activity is too little differentiated for it to be able to regard the ideas or images of objects by themselves, apart from the sentiments, emotions, and passions which evoke them, or are evoked by them.” The collective representations . . . express or rather imply, not only that the “person” actually has an image of the object and believes it is real, but also that he hopes or fears something from it; that some definite action emanates from it or is exercised upon it. This action is an influence, a virtue, an occult power, varying according to its objects and circumstances, but always real to “him,” and forming an integral part of his representation. If I were to express in one word this general property of the collective representation holding so important a place in the mental activity of undeveloped peoples, I should say that their mental activity was a *mystic* one . . . employing . . . the term . . . in the strictly definite sense in which ‘mystic’ implies belief in forces and influences and actions, which, though imperceptible to sense, are nevertheless real. In other words, the reality on which “most people including “primitives live is itself mystical. Not a single being or object or natural phenomenon in their collective representations is what it appears to be in our minds . . . Primitive perception is fundamentally mystic on account of the mystic nature of the collective representations which form an integral part of every perception . . . To the primitive mind the mystic properties of things and beings

⁴² Lucien Levy-Bruhl: *How Natives Think (Les Fonctions Mentales dans les Sociétés Inférieures)*. Authorized translation, Lillian A. Clare. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 13.) (pp. 35-68.) Who, curiously, specially ascribes these mental workings to the members of primitive societies alone, simply because that was the only place he happened to look for them.

form an integral part of their representation, which is at that moment a synthetic whole."

V.

THE RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE.

Finally we come to contemporary religion, as it is actually being experienced. Investigation of the belief in a personal, humanly feeling, or anthropopathic God among a large group of American college students by means of a questionnaire, has yielded much important information on this religion.⁴³ Its questions as answered by as extensive an account as each person cared to give, showed a wide variety of notions of the personal or impersonal nature of god, of the form, image or symbol under which God is thought of, and of God's relation to man. The diverse and contrasting descriptions showed what kinds of being God is now thought of as being. But the accounts of what these Gods are supposed to do for man reached the crux of the whole situation. These are landed right in the midst of religion, as it is now experienced. "Believing in a personal God does not necessarily mean holding those relations with him that constitute religious life. The belief may be a mere echo of tradition or a philosophical notion." The fact that one says he believes in a God makes little difference. "The needs gratified by the belief in God may be classified under three heads: the need for explanation, for righteousness, and for effective support. A philosophical conviction of the existence of God, *i. e.*, a belief that gratifies intellectual curiosity, is rare among these students." This is hopeful, for to use God as an answer for anything is merely to lay inquiry to rest with a word. "But God is very often spoken of as the principle of righteousness, manifesting itself in us, or as the Being whose approval or love makes it possible for us to triumph over temptation and gives us hope of realizing our ideals." So God helps us to live rightly, morally, hopefully! And God is further used to hear and answer wishes, cravings, and desires! Here, then, the religious belief in God is actually involved in the process of living! And most claim they need to so believe in their God, though a large majority affirms its complete independence of the belief. Traditional opinion and deductions from other beliefs raise the percentage of dependence as given above that which actually exists. It is only as a result of these influences that a narrow majority answers to the thoroughgoing necessity or occasional handiness of believing in God. But this is merely the sum of rote answers. They are but untested convictions. On the other hand, the minority of satisfied unbelievers represents tried and proved convictions of independence of the prime religious belief.

In any case, some instances remain in which the belief in God is actually made a part of experience. A sentiment has been built up around it. It has become part of living. These are our test cases. At present the belief in God is known to be baseless. Yet these are using this religious folkway as a part of their experience. The experience is then centered about religious figments which substitute for those actual, and authentic things upon which it should be kept close. The experience is eccentric and irrelevant as regards anything genuine. It is nothing more than the experiencing of a collective representation built upon the folkways. It is not at all in touch at first hand with any actual situation. This unrelatedness of its source to anything real must eventually have for its outcome a similar unguine-

ness in the resulting experience itself. A less comprehensive questionnaire⁴⁴ yielded a somewhat wider range of religious conceptions in a group of university teachers and students. Whenever religion was defined as some relationship to a God, the nature of the God in question was to be in each case stated. In the resulting series of brief aphoristic characterizations, God was either described as personal in the traditional phrases, or limned impersonally as something rather far removed from experience. God was then—a being existing outside of things, but part of this scheme, an object for the usual religious attitudes, something vaguely apprehended, above, superior, and all-embracing, a faith. Such religious belief was either a rational conviction of special degree, or a more practical, working, experimental conviction. The standing of such conceptions and their bearing on experience is in all cases much the same. "In Christianity, neither morality nor religion is in contact with any point of actuality. Nothing but imaginary causes ("God," "soul," "ego," "spirit," "freewill"—or even "unfreewill"); nothing but imaginary effects ("sin," "salvation," "grace," "punishment," "forgiveness of sin"). An intercourse between imaginary beings ("God," "spirits," "souls"); an imaginary science of nature (anthropocentric; absolute lack of the concept of natural causes): an imaginary psychology (nothing but self-misunderstandings, interpretations of pleasant or unpleasant general feelings, for examples, the conditions of the nervous *sympatheticus*, with the help of the sign—language of religio-moral idiosyncrasy, "repentance," "remorse of conscience," "temptation by the devil," "presence of God"); an imaginary teleology ("the kingdom of God," "the last judgment," "life everlasting").—This purely *fictionitious* world is, greatly to its disadvantage, distinguished from the dream-world, in that while the latter reflects actuality, the former falsifies, depreciates, and negatives it."⁴⁵

CURTIS BRUEN.

(To be continued.)

Freethinkers and Their Fate.

PROTAGORAS, who lived in the fifth century A.D., was hounded out of Athens on account of his Atheism and found peace in the sea. His writings were publicly burned.

Socrates, who lived from 479-399 A.D., was accused of turning the young people from the Gods recognized by the State. Sentenced to death, he defended himself bravely and worthily. At seventy years of age he emptied the poisoned cup.

Arnold of Brescia, the bold and feared opponent of the Church during the twelfth century, led a life of constant peril. Finally he fled to Tuscany, where he fell into the hands of Frederick the First, who handed him over to the prefect of the town. Arnold was condemned to the gallows, and his body burned and the ashes thrown in the Tiber.

The famous Italian reformer, Savonarola, fought for a long time against the infamy of the Church. His enemies arrased and hunted him, and with the rack squeezed out of him a "confession" and then burned him. (May, 1498.)

Ulrich von Hutten, the pioneer fighter for intellectual freedom, led an unsettled life. At the conquest of Pavia he lost his all, and to save himself joined the armies of retainers. He was born in 1523.

⁴³ J. Cyril Flower: *An Approach to the Psychology of Religion*. (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Company, 1927.) (pp. 231-242.)

⁴⁵ Frederick Nietzsche: *The Anti-Christ, An Essay Towards a Criticism of Christianity*, translated by Thomas Common (New York: Macmillan, 1896), Section 15.

⁴⁴ Leuba: *The Belief in God and Immortality*. (pp. 184-192.)

The independent reformer, Thomas Muenzer, was obliged to flee, but his enemies followed him, and together with twenty-five of his followers, he was beheaded at twenty-five years of age. He was born in 1526.

The learned and intellectual printer, Etienne Dolet, was burned as an heretic in 1546.

The famous and learned Doctor Michael Servetus was seized and condemned to death as a Freethinker in October, 1533. He would not recant, so he suffered the penalty. His informer was Calvin the preacher. Rabelais, the greatest satyrist of France, lived in a Franciscan Monastery, where he soon became disliked on account of his Freethought. His Greek books were taken from him and he was thrown into prison. He was born in 1555.

The religious philosopher, Uriel Acosta, born 1640, was so persecuted by the Jewish Church, that he was driven to end his life with a pistol. Giordano Bruno, the philosopher of Monism, was seized by the Jews and delivered up to the Catholic Church. For hereticism he was sentenced to death and burned in the Campo dei Fiori the 17 February, 1600. The Freethought writer, Lucilio, was sent to the pile for spreading so-called Atheistic views. (1619.)

Galilei was sent by the Inquisition to the dungeons, and after his release remained under the eyes of the Tribunal.

On the death of the author Maliere, the religious world refused a burial, so he was buried under the shades of night to the accompaniment of the curses of the rabble. Spinoza was put under the ban of the Church for his liberty in religious views, and had to flee to Holland, where he earned a living polishing optical glasses. He died poor and a victim of lung disease in 1677.

Bayle, one of the most influential philosophical writers of France, was condemned as a Freethinker, and his property confiscated.

The Chemist, Johann Konrad Dippel, had to live all his life amongst the bitterest enmity. He had to flee several times from the wrath of his religious enemies, then he was at last deprived of his honour and held in prison at Bornholm for seven years.

The French philosopher, Lamettrie, was persecuted by the religious, and was obliged to flee. His writings were burned as Atheistic works. He found a resting place with Frederick the Second, who gave him the position as lecturer.

Johann Jakob Moser, one of the best publicists of Germany, was arrested by orders of the Duke of Wuerttemberg as the author of some anti-Wuerttemberg writings and sentenced to five years close confinement.

Diderot's writings were declared to be Atheistic, and brought him a year's imprisonment as reward.

The Freethinking author, Ch. Dan. Schubart, was condemned to ten years close imprisonment by Karl Eugen von Wuerttemberg as an heretical writer, and held without the opportunity of defence.

Rouget de Lisle, the author of the Marseillaise, spent his last days in prison for debt.

Messenhauer, the well-known fighter for Freethought in 1848, was openly and lawfully shot. The same fate came to the German democrat Robert Blum. The French composer, Beranger, had to spend a year in prison on account of his Freethinking muse, and was fined 10,000 francs.

Francesco Ferrer was shot at the instigation of the Jesuits for his attempts to free the world from superstition.

L. CORINNA.

Men are limited in power, and are oft in peril, and those who are taught to trust to supernatural aid are betrayed to their own destruction. We are told we should work as though there were no help in Heaven, and pray as though there were no help in ourselves. Since, however, praying saves no ship, arrests no disease, and does not pay the tax-gatherer, it is better to work at once and without the digression of sinking prayer-buckets into empty wells, and spending life in drawing it up. The word illuminating secular life is *self-help*. The Secularist vexes not the ear of heaven by medicant supplications. His is the only religion that gives heaven no trouble.—George Jacob Holyoake, "The Origin and Nature of Secularism."

The Wisdom of Maxim Gorki.

"In the World."

(Continued from page 365.)

THE amount of resistance to environment may roughly be defined as character, and a peculiar charm of Gorki's confession lies, we think, in his stubborn purpose of not allowing the coarse and brutal to make him give up his lofty ideals then in the making. Who has not at some time or other in their lives, almost been dangerously driven to the conclusion that it is easier to swim with the tide of opinion than trouble to examine, test, and form an independent judgment? The line of least resistance by the many is the line of strongest resistance by the few, and between this tension ideas take form, grow, and are eventually accepted. There was in this writer's youth, enough evil influences at work to effectively prevent any growth of spirit, but, taking Gorki as a "sport," his strength of will successfully fought and overcame them. He would be living at a time when the fuel for the great revolution was accumulating—when the escape into stoicism was not enough for those who were tired of suffering—when, by some process of reasoning the cruelty of the Russian nobility was reflected in the cruelty of the peasants to each other. But throughout all this Gorki records in words of gold: "And although in the end I shall lie in the earth disfigured, I can say, not without pride, to my last hour, that good people did their very best for forty years to disfigure my soul, but their labours were not successful." This definition "good" has a true Nietzschean ring about it; he had mixed with the devout, wife-beating, ikon-worshipping, superstitious individuals who are universal types, and their "good" was assessed at its true value.

It is necessary, at this point, to make a few references to this author's conception of the word "soul"—a word which has become polarized in our language—an abstraction in many senses the same as the word "mind." One refreshing, and in our opinion, cheerful symptom in all his books where he allows us to share his intimate thoughts, is, that he is not obsessed with this word or its meaning. Prince D. S. Mirsky, in *Russian Literature, 1881-1925*, is most generous in the space given to him, and in our opinion, just to an extreme, for the compiler of this work does not conceal a bias. In his own words he writes: "The greatest name in the realistic revival is Maxim Gorki's. Next to Tolstoy he is to-day the only Russian author of the modern period, who has a really world-wide reputation, and one which is not, like Chekhov's, confined to the *intelligentsias* of the various countries of the world." At a later place Mirsky's admission is significant; the well-worn path of Platonism is trodden again—the Good, the True, and the Beautiful, are transposed as follows: "As it is, Gorki's autobiographical series represents the world as ugly, but not unrelieved—the redeeming points, which may and must save humanity, are enlightenment, beauty, and sympathy." In no place does Gorki fling at the reader his undigested thoughts about the soul, and also, he maintains an even tenour of disinterest which is his strength. The terrifying world of reality speaks to us through the mouths of peasants—added to this is the penetrating and minute power of observation of the author who missed nothing. He records for all time the fact that no particular class has a monopoly of vice or virtue, and very plainly defines man's salvation as residing in himself. He is true to earth.

His escape from home, and his going aboard a boat on the Volga was a great turning point in his life. As a washer-up on the steamer named "The Good," this brought him into contact with a strong character, the cook, Smouri, who gave the boy his introduction to literature. After an acquaintance lasting during the journey, the wanderer parts from this friend, from whom he learned so much. "So many times since then I have met people like him—kind, lonely, cut off from the lives of other people" he writes of one who had led him to "Taras Bulba," one of Gogol's novels of Cossack life. Other books which the cook made him read were, in the author's words, "clamped in iron." Smouri, after a re-

volting episode on board, says, "One must have pity on people. We are all unhappy. Life is hard for all of us." Here is a virtue, which our own Chaucer touched with loving fingers, and it is something that we would not willingly let go.

Once more he became a washer-up, this time on a boat called "The Perm," and his best friend is a stoker-man named Yaakov Shumov. Yaakov was a man who had cultivated self-control to its extreme limit, and his counsel to Gorki has the real flavour of wisdom—but he cannot enlighten the inquirer on the soul. "The soul is the breath of God," asserts the stoker. To this, Gorki writes: "This did not enlighten me much, and I asked for more, upon which the stoker, inclining his head, said: 'Even priests do not know much about the soul, little brother, that is hidden from us.'"

Later on we shall return to Gorki's attitude towards the soul; it may be that the æsthetic find him too sincere—too downright—and this is easily understood when Shakespeare is too strong for these children, and when the gradual departure from the real world leaves these pretty creatures juggling about with pretty words that are, in the finish, only a distortion of the world leading readers nowhere.

The well-known poet, Beranger, had a great influence on Gorki. He aroused in him moods of joyfulness, and also a desire to create poetry himself. To what was an unappreciative audience, he had recited some lines, and this provoked offensive remarks from a soldier, and as a reply, Gorky hit him on the head with a saucepan. This was not the reply courteous—but it did at least show that the heights of Parnassus have defenders—there is a touch of Cyrano de Bergerac in this action, and our author was well on the way to that stage where thought is attacked through the feelings.

When any publishers with sufficient courage to make a complete edition of Gorky can be tempted, there may be a pleasant surprise awaiting them. At present his numerous works present the same appearance as the various editions of Mr. Eden Phillpotts. They are big and little, elegant and otherwise, a different publisher for almost each volume, all awaiting a master touch to bind together the priceless wisdom of a man who has given us a profound reading of the book of life. Towards the close of *In the World*, he states, "I am a lover of humanity, and I have no desire to make anyone miserable, but one must not be sentimental, nor hide the grim truth with the motley words of beautiful lies. Let us face life as it is. All that is good and human in our hearts and brains needs renewing." There is no straining of comparison, for he insistently reminds one of Meredith:—

Verily now is our season of seed,
Now is our Autumn; and Earth discerns
Them that have served her in them that can read,
Glassing, where under the surface she burns,
Quick at her wheel while the fuel, decay,
Brightens the fire of renewal: and we?
Death is the word of a bovine day,
Know you the breast of the springing To-be.
A second reading of *In the World*, reveals new beauties—evokes new thoughts, is mentally bracing, and is time well spent. Gorky has no particular philosophy, but he has a working knowledge of all. It is there for all who desire to learn, and whilst learned philosophers may discourse on life looked at with one eye, our author who has been mangled in the workaday world, holds his grip on things as they are, and with faith firm and fixed, shows by example that without human beings the earth is barren. And that to us is heroic—that is his strength; it is the attitude of a man.

WILLIAM REPTON.

See what a pretty public stir,
They're making down at Exeter
About this surplice fashion.
For me I little know or care,
Whether a parson ought to wear
A black dress or a white dress.
Plagued with a trouble of my own,
A wife who preaches in her gown
And lectures in her night-dress

Theodore Hook.

From the N.S.S. Secretary.

The Society is issuing a number of new propagandist leaflets, with reprints of old ones. Will Branch Secretaries and others please send along their orders and help in their distribution? The cost is only sixpence and a shilling per hundred, and there are few persons who cannot distribute a hundred or so with advantage to the Movement. Summer-time should be seed-time, so far as Freethought is concerned.

Has every N.S.S. member secured an N.S.S. badge? It is a very convenient and useful form of introduction of one member to another, and has led to many friendships. The cost of a badge is ninepence.

Will Branch Secretaries please note that the usual time for an Executive meeting is the last Friday in each month. Applications for membership should be received before that date, and cards of membership will be issued as soon after the Executive meeting as is possible.

Why not make 1929 a record year for New Members? There are thousands of readers of the *Freethinker* who have not yet signed a form of membership—not to mention the large number of potential members who are to be found round every corner. The drift from the Churches should be our opportunity. We have been largely responsible for the exodus, and we should reap the benefit. The minimum annual subscription is 2s. All above that depends upon inclination and opportunity.

Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."
THAT PLEA FOR TOLERANCE.

SIR,—D. Matthews, in his letter, is merely exercising his right to criticize an attitude of mind to which he objects. M. Wilson wrongly assumes that this criticism indicates intolerance. Criticism and ridicule are legitimate weapons for the work of trying to convince persons of error, and to cure them of the vice of intellectual timidity. If Atheists are "fearful" of "forcefully condemning," the error will never get exposed and the vice cured.

D.P.S.

Neglected.

WHEN Solomon was young and strong;
When he was lithe, and blithe and jolly,
O, then he clothed in deathless song,
His bonny Jane, and lovely Polly.

So overborne with joy was he,
To hear them sing, and view them dancing,
That he joined in the theme with glee,
And with them round and round went prancing.

Seven hundred maidens thus were won,
And quite three hundred ringless ladies,
Then was a war of sex begun,
That changed his Paradise to Hades.

Poor Solomon, no longer strong,
No longer lithe, and blithe, and jolly,
Broods o'er those times of dance and song,
With bonny Jane, and lovely Polly.

And while he sits with head downcast,
His mind perturbed, his heart dejected,
A thousand women amble past,
Each with a flag inscribed: NEGLECTED.

S. PULMAN.

Society News.

FULHAM AND CHELSEA BRANCH.

THOUGH only eighteen months of age, this Branch has been successful in holding Saturday night meetings continuously since its inception. Various speakers have graced its platform, and none more welcome than Mr. F. P. Corrigan, who on Saturday last gained the marked attention of a large audience, with the Gospel of Free-thought. Mr. Betts of West London also deserves our thanks for his willing and kind assistance.

There must be many sympathetic Freethinkers in this neighbourhood who are waiting to know of my address to enable them to help in our good work.

A card to 32 Micklethwaite Road, S.W.6, will ensure them the receipt of a membership form.—A. J. MATHIE.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE TOWN MOOR, on Sunday evenings, has for many years been a capital place for all kinds of outdoor propaganda. Owing to the huge crowds that now gather there to see the Exhibition buildings, and to listen to the music of the bells, which ring after eight o'clock, it is now better than ever for propagandist meetings. On May 28, Mr. Whitehead held a splendid meeting there, and was followed by Mr. J. C. Keast on June 2, and again a large and attentive meeting was held, the only discordant note being a question or two from a Roman Catholic. On June 9, the weather again being ideal, Mr. J. T. Brighton, the energetic Secretary of the Chester-le-Street Branch gave an excellent lecture on Secular Education, and again a large crowd assembled, many of whom heard, doubtless for the first time, the Secularists views in regard to the audacity of the Roman Catholic's demands.

The only regrettable aspect of those meetings so far is the conspicuous absence of many who might at least occasionally show some appreciation and help to encourage those who carry on the work.—J.G.B.

SEVEN satisfactory meetings were addressed by Mr. Whitehead in various parts of Liverpool. The three meetings held in Islington Square succeeded in interesting quite a good number of people, in spite of rival meetings which, now the election is over, will not have the same attraction. A meeting held at Beaumont Street was thoroughly enjoyed by a crowd which appreciated the humorous sallies of the lecturer, and even the policeman on duty smiled broadly at some of the remarks. Two meetings at High Park Street carried our banner to another part of the city with the same success, and a Sunday evening meeting at a new pitch in Queen's Drive introduced Secularism, probably for the first time, to a large part of an audience which had mostly interrupted its walk to listen, out of curiosity, for a few ruptured its walk to listen, out of curiosity, to unfamiliar doctrines and remained out of interest. Many *Freethinkers* and leaflets were distributed during the week.

In the Silence.

A PALM, a rock, and one pale star
Within a vault of deepest blue;
The ocean moaning on the bar,
And a heart that aches for you!

A white moon rising o'er the hill,
Like a crushed pearl with rim of gold;
The night-jar's murmur, sweet though shrill,
And the night sighs manifold!

A ship alight with orange flame,
Creeping along the darkening foam;
Then as I breathe your dear, dear name,
Fond memories of Home—
Of Love—and You—and Home!

J. M. STUART-YOUNG.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

Lecture notices must reach 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.5, 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, Dr. Stanton Coit—"The World Crisis in Religion and Ethics To-day."

THE NON-POLITICAL METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (The Orange Tree Hotel, Euston Road, N.W.1): Thursday, June 20, at 101 Tottenham Court Road, 7.30 to 11.30. Social and Dance. Admission 1s.

OUTDOOR.

FULHAM AND CHELSEA BRANCH N.S.S. (corner of Shorrolde Road, North End Road, Waltham Green): Every Saturday at 8 p.m. Speaker—Mr. F. P. Corrigan—A Lecture.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 12.0, Messrs. R. G. Lennard and James Hart; 3.30, Messrs. B. Betts and James Hart; 6.30, Messrs. B. A. Le Maine and A. H. Hyatt. 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.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Ravenscourt Park, Hammersmith): 3.30, Mr. F. P. Corrigan and others.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N.S.S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand): 3.15, Mr. B. A. Le Maine—"Christianity and Modern Thought."

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

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Regent's Park, near the Fountain): 6.0, Mr. F. Mann.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Clapham Common): 11.30, Mr. S. Hanson; Brockwell Park, 6.30, Mr. S. Hanson; Wednesday, Clapham Old Town, 8.0, Mr. F. P. Corrigan; Friday, Liverpool Street, Camberwell Gate, 8.0, Mr. L. Ebury.

COUNTRY.

OUTDOOR.

BOLTON BRANCH N.S.S.—Mr. Whitehead commences a series of lectures on June 15.

MR. JACK CLAYTON will lecture at the following places this week: Sunday, June 16, Rawtenstall; Monday, June 17, Higham; Thursday, June 20, Whalley.

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

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N.S.S.—Monday, June 17, at 7.30, Beaumont Street—Mr. J. V. Shortt—A Lecture.

GLASGOW BRANCH N.S.S.—Ramble from Aberfoyle to Lock Drunkie. Train leaves Queen Street at 1.25. Fare 3s. return.

CHESTER-LE-STREET BRANCH N.S.S. (Stanley, Athol Street): Saturday, June 15, at 7.15. Speakers—Messrs. W. Raine, T. Brown, J. T. Brighton. Will local Freethinkers please note.

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

A Book for Thinkers.

LIFE, MIND & KNOWLEDGE

— BY —

J. C. THOMAS, B.Sc.

(Keridon).

The Rt. Hon. J. M. ROBERTSON is in full agreement with the Author's philosophic attitude, and highly appreciates the "pungency and alertness of his handling and especially his strictures on the Metaphysician."

Price - 1s. 6d.

Postage 2½d.

Bargains in Books!

HUMAN BEHAVIOUR in relation to the Study of Educational, Social, and Ethical Problems. By STEWART PATON, M.D. (Lecturer in Neuro-Biology at Princeton University).

Published 1921 at 21/- . PRICE 7/- Postage 9d.

RELIGIOUS THOUGHT AND HERESY IN THE MIDDLE AGES. By F. W. BUSSELL. Contains elaborate studies of Religion and Heresy in Hindustan and Further Asia, and Islam, its Sects and Philosophy. 873 pp.

Published 1918 at 21/- . PRICE 6/6. Postage 9d. (home); 1/2 (abroad).

ROBERT BUCHANAN (The Poet of Revolt). Complete Poetical Works, Two Vols. Contains the author's remarkable and lengthy Freethinking poems, "The Devil's Case," "The Wandering Jew."

Published at 15/- . PRICE 6/6. Postage 9d.

FREUD'S THEORIES OF THE NEUROSES. By Dr. H. HITSCHMANN. With an Introduction by ERNEST JONES, M.D., M.R.C.P. An English edition of this well-known book, which heretofore has been obtainable only in the imported American edition. It provides a summary and a sympathetic presentation of the Freudian theory.

Published at 12/6. PRICE 3/6. Postage 5d.

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

UNWANTED CHILDREN

In a Civilized Community there should be no UNWANTED Children.

For an Illustrated Descriptive List (68 pages) of Birth Control Requisites and Books, send a 1½d. stamp to—

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

Miscellaneous Advertisements.

FOR SALE.—1926 James 349 c.c. Motor Cycle, in perfect running order, with extra large equipment of Spares and Accessories. 1927 Watsonian "Monarch" Sidecar, on Watsonian Model "P" Chassis, four point attachment, fitted with Sandum "Ace" Screen and Hood. Head, rear, and Sidecar Electric Light Equipment, with two 4-volt. Accumulators in wells under sidecar seat. 1928 Watsonian Commercial Box, quick detachable, and interchangeable with sidecar body. If a Freethinker buys, the lot can be had for £22 prompt cash, and delivery given by road anywhere within a radius of 60 miles.—MACCONNELL & MABE, LTD., New Street, Bakewell, Derbyshire.

BIRTH CONTROL.—Every Adult should possess a copy of *Conception Control—Why and How.* Deals with the subject plainly and cleanly. Describes safest and best means to adopt, whereby prevention may be obtained at a very low cost. Above booklet sent POST FREE by THE LONDON MEDICAL AGENCY, Dept. F, 91 St. Martin's Lane, London, W.C.2.

FOR SALE.—Singer (1922) 9.8 h.p.; smart, 2-seater, dickey, grey. Reason for selling Death. £25.—MRS. LEE, 57, Hillhouse Lane, Huddersfield.

EARN money writing showcards for us at home: we train you by post and supply steady work at good pay.—Apply SHOW CARD SERVICE, LTD., Hitchin.

SOME PIONEER PRESS PUBLICATIONS:

RUINS OF EMPIRES. By C. F. VOLNEY. With the Law of Nature. Revised Translation, with Portrait, Plates, and Preface by GEORGE UNDERWOOD. 5s., postage 3d.

JESUS CHRIST: MAN, GOD, OR MYTH? By GEORGE WHITEHEAD. With a Chapter on "Was Jesus a Socialist?" Cloth, 3s., postage 2½d.

MISTAKES OF MOSES. By COL. R. G. INGERSOLL. 1d., postage ¼d.

WHAT IS IT WORTH? By COL. R. G. INGERSOLL. A Study of the Bible. 1d., postage ¼d.

RELIGION AND WOMEN. By GEORGE WHITEHEAD. 6d., postage 1d.

CHRISTIANITY IN CHINA. By W. MANN. An Exposure of Foreign Missions. Price 6d., postage 1d.

REALISTIC APHORISMS AND PURPLE PATCHES. By ARTHUR FALLOWS. Paper Covers, 3s. 6d., postage 4½d.

AN ESSAY ON SUICIDE. By DAVID HUME. With an Historical and Critical Introduction by G. W. FOOTE. 1d., postage ¼d.

THE OTHER SIDE OF DEATH. By CHAPMAN COHEN. A Critical Examination of the Belief in a Future Life, with a Study of Spiritualism from the Standpoint of the New Psychology. Paper Covers, 2s., postage 1½d.; Cloth Bound, 3s. 6d., postage 2d.

BIBLE ROMANCES. By G. W. FOOTE. An illustration of G. W. Foote at his best. 2s. 6d., postage 3d.

HISTORY OF THE CONFLICT BETWEEN RELIGION AND SCIENCE. By Prof. J. W. DRAPER. 395 pages. 2s., postage 4½d.

SCIENCE AND THE SOUL. By W. MANN. With a Chapter on Infidel Death-Beds. 3d., postage 1d.

THE CASE AGAINST THEISM. By GEORGE WHITEHEAD. A Reasonable View of God. Cloth Bound, 2s. 6d., postage 2½d.

THEISM OR ATHEISM? By CHAPMAN COHEN. The Great Alternative. An Exhaustive Examination of the Evidences on behalf of Theism, with a Statement of the Case for Atheism. Bound in full Cloth, Gilt Lettered, 3s. 6d., postage 2½d.

RELIGION AND SEX. By CHAPMAN COHEN. Studies in the Pathology of Religious Development. 6s., postage 6d.

CHRISTIANITY AND CIVILIZATION. By Prof. J. W. DRAPER. A Chapter from *The History of the Intellectual Development of Europe.* 2d., postage ½d.

SOCIETY AND SUPERSTITION. By ROBERT ARCH. A Commonsense View of Religion and its Influence on Social Life. 4d., postage ½d.

COMMUNISM AND CHRISTIANITY. By Rt. Rev. W. M. BROWN. Analysed and Contrasted from the Standpoint of Darwinism and Marxism. With Portraits. 1s., post free. (Paper.) Cloth 4s.

THE ROBES OF PAN. By A. MILLAR. Literary Essays. 6d., postage 1d.

MODERN MATERIALISM. By W. MANN. A Candid Examination. 1s. 6d., postage 2d.

A FIGHT FOR RIGHT. A Verbatim Report of the Decision in the House of Lords in *re* Bowman and Others *v.* The Secular Society, Limited. With Introduction by Chapman Cohen. 6d., postage 1d.

THE MARTYRDOM OF HYPATIA. By M. M. MANGASARIAN. 1d., postage ¼d.

THE HISTORICAL JESUS AND MYTHICAL CHRIST. By GERALD MASSEY. A Demonstration of the Origin of Christian Doctrines in the Egyptian Mythology. 6d., postage 1d.

THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH. By COL. R. G. INGERSOLL. 1d., postage ¼d.

WHAT IS RELIGION? By COL. R. G. INGERSOLL. Contains Col. Ingersoll's Confession of Faith. 1d., postage ¼d.

THE BIBLE HANDBOOK. By G. W. FOOTE and W. P. BALL. For Freethinkers and Inquiring Christians. Fifth Edition. 2s. 6d., postage 2½d.

MATERIALISM RE-STATED. By CHAPMAN COHEN. A clear and concise statement of one of the most important issues in the history of Science and Philosophy. Cloth bound 2s. 6d., postage 2½d.

YOU WANT ONE.



N.S.S. BADGE.—A single Pansy flower, size as shown; artistic and neat design in enamel and silver. This emblem has been the silent means of introducing many kindred spirits. Brooch or Stud Fastening. Price 9d., post free.—From THE GENERAL SECRETARY, N.S.S., 61, FARRINGTON ST., E.C.4.

Now Ready.

The Bible and Prohibition.

BIBLE and BEER

(Issued by the Secular Society, Ltd.)

By G. W. FOOTE.

A careful examination of the Relations of the Bible and Christian leaders to the Drink Question.

Price - - - TWOPENCE.
Postage ½d.

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

Five Leaflets by Chapman Cohen.

WHAT IS SECULARISM ?

6d. per 100.

DO YOU WANT THE TRUTH ?

1/- per 100 (4 pages).

THE BELIEFS OF UNBELIEVERS.

1/- per 100 (4 pages).

DOES MAN DESIRE GOD ?

1/- per 100 (4 pages).

ARE CHRISTIANS INFERIOR TO FREETHINKERS ?

1/- per 100 (4 pages).

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

LIFE OF THOMAS PAINE

By F. J. GOULD.

GILT CLOTH PORTRAIT PUBLISHED 4/6 NET.

Price - Two Shillings. Postage 3d.
Only a limited number of copies available.

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

The Secular Society, Ltd.

Company Limited by Guarantee.

Registered Office: 62 FARRINGTON ST., LONDON, E.C.4.

Secretary: MR. R. H. ROSETTI.

THIS Society was formed in 1898 to afford legal security to the acquisition and application of funds for Secular purposes. The Memorandum of Association sets forth that the Society's Objects are:—To promote the principle that human conduct should be based upon natural knowledge, and not upon supernatural belief, and that human welfare in this world is the proper end of all thought and action. To promote freedom of inquiry. To promote universal Secular Education. To promote the complete secularization of the State, etc. And to do all such lawful things as are conducive to such objects. Also to have, hold, receive, and retain any sums of money paid, given, devised, or bequeathed by any person, and to employ the same for any of the purposes of the Society.

Members pay an entrance fee of ten shillings, and a subsequent yearly subscription of five shillings. The liability of members is limited to £1, in case the Society should ever be wound up.

All who join the Society participate in the control of its business and the trusteeship of its resources. It is expressly provided in the Articles of Association that no member, as such, shall derive any sort of profit from the Society, either by way of dividend, bonus, or interest.

The Society's affairs are managed by an elected Board of Directors, one-third of whom retire (by ballot), each year, but are eligible for re-election.

Friends desiring to benefit the Society are invited to make donations, or to insert a bequest in the Society's favour in their wills. The now historic decision of the House of Lords in *re Bowman and Others v. the Secular Society, Limited*, in 1927, a verbatim report of which may be obtained from its publishers, the Pioneer Press, or from the Secretary, makes it quite impossible to set aside such bequests.

A Form of Bequest.—The following is a sufficient form of bequest for insertion in the wills of testators:—

I give and bequeath to the Secular Society, Limited, the sum of £—free from Legacy Duty, and I direct that a receipt signed by two members of the Board of the said Society and the Secretary thereof shall be a good discharge to my Executors for the said Legacy.

It is advisable, but not necessary, that the Secretary should be formally notified of such bequests, as wills sometimes get lost or mislaid. A form of membership, with full particulars, will be sent on application to the Secretary, Mr. R. H. ROSETTI, 62 FARRINGTON STREET, LONDON, E.C.4.

MATERIALISM: HAS IT BEEN EXPLODED ?

Verbatim Report of Debate between

Chapman Cohen and G. E. M. Joad.

One Shilling Net. 3 3 Postage 1½d.

Revised by both Disputants.

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

Evolution for the Young.

Prehistoric Man and His Ancestors

By ONA MELTON.

Cloth with 5 Plates.

Price - 1s. 6d. Postage 1½d. extra.