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Views and Opinions.

Bishop Barnes Again!

BISHOP BARNES has again been disturbing the religious dovecote. In the first place the *Church Times* falls foul of him on a question of taste. Speaking of a statue of the Virgin and child, the bishop is reported as saying that it was a "figure of a female holding a child." The editor thinks this is offensive because, to the vast majority of Christians "Our Lady is a holy and radiant personage," and in describing her as a female, he must obviously have deliberately intended to offend Catholics in general, and Birmingham Catholics in particular. Legally, I may point out, to offend Christians is a very serious offence; it is, indeed, blasphemy, since the offence of blasphemy consists, not in saying things that are untrue about Christianity, but in saying what may be quite true, but in such a way that it is intended or calculated to wound the feelings of Christians. In more Christian circumstances we might find the *Church Times* proposing that Bishop Barnes should be tried for blasphemy.

But why is the statement offensive? Every mother is a female, and the statue of Mary and the baby is clearly that of a female holding a child. If one were describing a picture of an ordinary woman and child no one would consider the description inaccurate or offensive. I fancy it is the "Holy and radiant" that does the trick here. Think of Mary as an ordinary woman, and one follows by thinking of the baby as an ordinary baby, conceived and born in the ordinary way, and one begins to look round for an ordinary father—and that breaks the magic circle of Christian verbiage. An ordinary woman, an ordinary baby, and an ordinary father, with no more room for a supernatural conception than there is in the case of the offspring of Mr. and Mrs. John Smith. If one wants to understand the theological significance of what is known as a religious atmosphere, it is found

in this instance. It means an atmosphere in which people can bring themselves to profess belief in inconceivable and absurd things, because they deliberately shut out the claims of ordinary common sense, and will not express themselves in ordinary language.

* * *

The Decay of the Clergy.

The second ground of offence was given in a sermon preached in Westminster Abbey on Sunday, June 9. The offence here was not exactly that of calling absurd things absurd, for the Bishop has plenty of absurdity in his own professions of belief, but because he stated some plain truths that are not very pleasant to ecclesiastical ears. Here are two passages in point:—

We are often told that there is no dearth of candidates for Holy Orders. But unfortunately many of those who now come forward are inadequate alike in mental capacity and in moral. Some wish social advancement; they should be rejected. Others have the lamentable confidence which the seminary produces.

Too many men ordained during and since the war cloak ignorance and inefficiency beneath an extravagant sacerdotalism.

Now if anyone fancies that Bishop Barnes has exaggerated the case, he need only apply one of two tests—or both. First, he may apply the historical test. Let him compare the intellectual quality of the leading clergy to-day with those of sixty years ago, and then take those of sixty years ago, and contrast them with those of, say a hundred and fifty years before that date. He will observe a progressive deterioration in the intellectual quality of the Lord's Anointed. Is there to-day in the ranks of the English clergy of any denomination one who can compare for sheer ability with, say, Cardinal Newman? I do not think that one could be produced. If we go back yet farther the difference is still more striking. To take up a volume of sermons by the leading seventeenth divines, is to feel that one is in touch with strong vigorous intellects, however intolerant the ideas views expounded, and however absurd the ideas expressed. And the insight gained in this way may be enforced by casting a glance round at the clergy of to-day. I have no hesitation in saying that there is no body of educated men in the country who so impresses one with their mediocrity as do the present-day clergy. Their influence on the intellectual life of to-day is—for the better—practically nil. No one of education looks to them for guidance; and very seldom do they venture to offer it. They become more and more the mouthpieces of the intellectually negligible.

How could it be otherwise? While the road to preferment led either through the Church, or at least by professing religious belief, religion could exert some real influence on life, and men of ability and in-

tegrity could enter the Church without any sense of self-stultification. But as a knowledge of the nature of religion became common, and as the secularization of life proceeded, men of first rate ability found the religious career more and more distasteful. The Church had to take what it could get so far as quality was concerned, and even with regard to quantity there have been strong complaints of recent years. Science, politics, commerce to-day monopolize the intelligence that was once spent in the service of the Christian Church; and the world is better for the transformation.

* * *

Neglecting God.

Dr. Barnes' specific subject was the decline of belief in the miraculous, and it is worth while noting the kind of treatment it received at his hand, and the kind of treatment it would receive at the hands of a churchman like Bishop Butler, if he were still alive. Science, he says, "finds everywhere in nature sequences which are never broken." That being so one begins to wonder wherein lies the substantial difference between saying that "God" is a useless hypothesis, and saying that God exists, but never interferes with things? Dr. Barnes replies, "That God can alter the mode of expression of his will no one doubts, but that He actually takes or has taken in the past such action is now generally doubted." How then does the Bishop know that God can alter the workings of things? He does not believe that it has ever happened. It is as much an act of blind and unwarrantable faith as the transformation of bread and wine into flesh and blood about which Bishop Barnes is so contemptuous.

There is, "he continues, "a unity throughout nature; within this unity the spiritual emerges from the physical and biological. Having thus emerged, it exists by virtue of its own reality." There is an atmosphere of cant growing up around that word "emergence," as though it meant something more than emergence. "Emergence" means only that two or more things in combination give rise to something which is not given in any of the factors separately, but which stands as a product of the combination. Once this product has "emerged" it is "real" in the sense that anything else that exists is real. Thus a stone moving through space and encountering opposition will generate heat. The heat, which is not in either of the factors involved, emerges as the product of the motion of the stone and the resistance of the atmosphere, or collision with some other object.

Now, the stone is "real," the resisting object is "real," the product of the impact is "real," everything that exists is "real" within the field of its own being. "Reality" covers everything that exists, and it has nothing of the "mystical" value that our theological philosophers attach to it. But in the case stated the "spiritual" owes its existence to forces already in existence, whereas the Christian theory demands that the spiritual shall exist independently of everything else. The Christian theory has it that the "spiritual" expresses itself through natural channels, using natural forces as a medium only. The doctrine of emergence says that the so-called spiritual is a product of natural forces, and that is Materialism pure and undefiled. Bishop Barnes is evidently confused as to what emergence is, and what Christian theory requires.

* * *

Evolution and Religion.

In view of the Bishop's criticism of the honesty and intelligence of so many of his brother clergy, one expects higher and better things from him. What we

get is the statement that Bishop Gore's concession of the truth of evolution, "which, virtually, no one disputes," "undermines the authority of the Bible on which the whole Anglican position is built." I should be far from contradicting that as I have always held that a scientific conception of evolution reduces the idea of God to so much intellectual wastage. But if the Anglican position is undermined by the theory of evolution, what is Bishop Barnes doing in the Anglican Church? The Bishop remarks that a young man "enthusiastic for all the new knowledge of our age, can to-day without dissimulation or hypocrisy become an Anglican clergyman." If that is so it is only because intellectual crookedness has become so established a feature of the Anglican Church—as well as of other churches—that it has become the regular rule of the order, and no one expects the same intellectual rectitude that is demanded by other professions. What, for example, is one to make of such expressions as "The Spiritual authority of Jesus must be spiritually discerned, it cannot be substantiated by proof that he had exceptional power to control nature or to heal disease"? "Spiritual discernment" can only mean that any crank or rogue may claim spiritual discernment, and there is nothing by which one can test him. It is the sign-manual of the religious fakir all over the world and in every age. In what way is the spiritual discernment of the man who sees in Jesus an incarnate deity superior to my spiritual discernment that the whole story is a myth? Why is the spiritual discernment of the headship of Jesus superior to the one that leads to the headship of Mohammed? Plainly such phrases are traps set to catch fools—devices intended to give the man without the inclination or the capacity for serious thinking a chance to plume himself upon the fearlessness of his thought. So far as modern religion is concerned, the religious field of the near future bids fair to be divided between the stupid superstition of the orthodox devotee, and the sophisticated evasions of the up-to-date theologian.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

Pious Paul Prys.

"Most people have no more definite idea of liberty than that it consists in being compelled by law to do as they like."—*Ambrose Bierce.*

"I care not what the sects may brawl."—*Tennyson.*

"This mystery of vending spiritual gifts is nothing but a trade."—*Swift.*

THE clown who wants to play "Hamlet" is a figure that often commands one's sympathy. The bishop who wants to be a policeman is a nuisance, and, as so many bishops feel that way, the nuisance is a growing one. Ignoring the very numerous Acts of Parliament that deal with so many phases of modern life, the right-reverend Fathers-in-God are for ever clamouring for further Acts of Parliament and further restrictions of the liberty of the ordinary citizen.

The latest clerical move is a case in point. The Bishop of Willesden, at the London Diocesan Conference, recently, moved a resolution stating that it was the duty of the Anglican Church to participate in the effort to prevent the circulation of pernicious books. He said indecent books were being published to-day wholesale. It was hoped to get an Act passed making it punishable to sell or publish indecent or obscene literature to anyone under the age of eighteen years.

The Bishop of London drew attention to a play, which he described as "the most immoral ever produced in London," and added that "we have spoken very strongly to the Lord Chamberlain, but we are unable to get the play altered." The resolution was carried.

One would imagine that obscenity was rife in England, and that the clergy were simply trying to stem a Niagara of nastiness. "At one fell swoop" indictments are launched against the drama and literature, just as if the clergy were persons of great social importance, and the London Diocesan Society other than a collection of busybodies.

The overt action of the bishops and their satellites is unnecessary. Acts of Parliament already exist which can be used, and are used, to prevent the circulation of pernicious literature. Within the past few years prosecutions have taken place. Plays are dealt with by the Lord Chamberlain who has the power of censorship. So that it seems that the activity in this direction of the clergy and their Diocesan Society is, as their Prayer Book describes it, entirely "a work of supererogation." Which, being translated into ordinary language, means that the clergy are as usefully employed as children playing at shops on a kitchen chair, with capital borrowed from mother.

Bishops are presumed to be sober men, but many of them are as hysterical as some women in the presence of a mouse. Note the exaggerations as to pernicious books being published wholesale, and the description of a play as "the most immoral ever produced in London." Not one book in ten thousand is ever open to such criticism, and the "best sellers" are as chaste as icebergs. As for plays, it would not be a surprise if the Bishop of London objected to Shakespeare's "Hamlet," on the ground that it was too homicidal; or to "Macbeth," because it introduced witchcraft.

To read such allusion to present-day literature and to contemporary playwrights, as if many of them were a noisome danger to society, is not pleasant. When such insults come from bishops, who thrust the open Bible into the hands of innocent childhood, one's sense of justice is outraged. For there are actually things in this old-world volume which are calculated to bring the blush of modesty on any face except that of a priest. Raw, naked filth, which cannot be read aloud to a mixed congregation, is forced compulsorily into the hands of every child. Priests are as loquacious as quack doctors, to which they bear so strong a resemblance, and attach such loose meanings to the words they fling about so recklessly, but how such men can read the account of Ezekiel's banquet, or the story of Onan, and the adventures of Lot, without remark, and point the finger of scorn at modern writers and dramatists is inexplicable, except on the assumption that they are insincere.

If the novels and plays of the day are likely to corrupt the morals of the rising generation, what, in the name of common sense, is the Old Testament calculated to do? There may be found plain, unvarnished accounts of rape, adultery, sodomy, and unnatural vice, written with all the nasty particularity and some of detail, which is the peculiar birthright of some Eastern writers. The florid, heated rhetoric of "The Song of Solomon," for example, leaves nothing to the imagination, and the least-lettered reader can appreciate the glowing periods. As a fact there is a Puritanical strain in English writers, and, speaking broadly, Oriental nastiness begins where our own leaves off.

The blustering indignation of the bishops is overdone, and will deceive few beyond the narrow range of their congregations. If they had any real reason for safeguarding the interests of the young, they would see at once, that, if an ordinary novel or play will corrupt a youth, their Bible would corrupt a regiment of Marines. No novelist or playwright could fill his pages with detailed accounts of incest, rape,

and unmentionable crimes, with impunity. The book would be destroyed by order of a Court of Law, and such a play would be refused a licence. Yet the clergy force their fetish-book, which contains all these things, and more, into the hands of every child. We do not believe in bowdlerizing books, but if ever there were any occasion for such drastic action, it certainly should be directed against the older portions of the Christian Bible. Instead of prating of indecent literature and pernicious plays, let the clergy set an example. Let them cease to force into the hands of innocent children a volume which they dare no longer read aloud in its completeness to a mixed audience of adults. Until they consent to do this they merit the title of "chartered libertines."

Nor is indecency the only accusation that can be brought against this fetish-book. It would be a thankless task to enumerate the false, foolish, and wicked features of this sacred volume, but it is full of barbarism from cover to cover, from title to colophon. From the first error in "Genesis" to the final absurdity in "Revelation," much of the writing is of pathological interest, although presented in exotic forms of verse. In many places in the earlier books the writing is filled with the scuffles and battles of savages, and the manners and customs of barbarians. As for the New Testament, the highly sensitive moral perceptions of to-day are shocked at the awful doctrine that countless millions of mankind will suffer everlasting punishment.

Contrary to priestly pretensions, it will be seen that it is not religion which purified humanity, but humanity which purifies religion. Man civilizes himself first, and then civilizes his gods, while the priests walk behind and take the credit and the cash.

A caustic critic might suggest the resemblance between the London Diocesan Society and a Mothers' Meeting. Bishops, or no bishops, this country no more wants to be governed by She-Men than by He-Women. But what a fall is there in this inglorious end. Once the Church Militant ruled through Inquisitions and Star Chambers, and men had to walk warily and speak softly. To-day men only smile at the querulous resolutions of Diocesan Societies and other meetings of the intellectually lost. The Church Militant has become the Church Suppliant, and is only saved from the fate of the "down and outs" by dead men's money.

At a certain club a discussion arose concerning the relative power of the judicature and the episcopate. A judge can say, "You be hanged," ventured one disputant. "Just so!" chirruped his opponent, "but when a judge says you be hanged, you are hanged."

That is the whole story in a nutshell.

MIMNERMUS.

Whatever doubt there may have been in the opinion of many concerning Descartes' scepticism, none could exist in reference to Spinoza. The whole Christian Church, not less than the Jewish, pronounced him a heretic of unmitigated character. His face was caricatured, and pains were taken to scatter broadcast throughout the country, pictures representing him with Satanic features, his hand armed with serpents, and with such legends as "Benedict Spinoza, Jew and Atheist," and "Benedict Spinoza, Prince of Atheists, bearing upon his face the marks of reprobation." Even sceptics themselves have united in declaring him an Atheist. Boyle defines Spinozism as "a regular system of Atheism," and Voltaire represents its author as a thin fallow Jew, walking deliberately up to the Divine Being, and saying in a subdued tone, "Pardon me, but between ourselves, I don't think you are in existence!

Dr. J. F. Hurst, "History of Rationalism."

A Candid Diplomatist.

(Concluded from page 373.)

ANOTHER missionary experience recorded by Sir Edmund Hornsby, occurred in China. A missionary body, near Canton, bought a piece of land, which they were allowed to do, upon informing the local Chinese authorities that they intended to build a hospital and doctor's home on it for the gratuitous treatment of the sick, without distinction of nationality or religion—a purely lay institution, without ality or religion—a purely lay institution neither sectarian nor religious. Sir Edmund says:—

They were allowed to purchase the ground on this understanding, when, instead of a hospital arose a chapel surrounded by missionary dwellings and then commenced an active propaganda. In a few months rows began, and one night the whole place was burnt down, and the missionaries escaped by the skin of their teeth—some unfortunate perverts being caught, tortured, and killed. On this the Minister and myself were beset; claims of no small amount came pouring in, and a fierce battle raged, fanned vigorously by Exeter Hall and the Press. On inquiry the facts were found to be as I have stated them, and I am sorry to say some compensation was obtained and paid.

As to the use of gun-boats, if during the eleven years I was in China there was one row—a genuine missionary-caused row—there were twenty, in each of which H.M.'s gun-boats reluctantly played a part, or at least humourously indulged in a little artillery practice. (Sir Edmund Hornsby: *An Autobiography*. p. 126.)

A kind of humour that the Chinese would find it difficult to appreciate.

During one of the many rows he got into, over the missionaries, he was summoned to the Foreign Office, Upon arriving there he was shown into Lord Palmerston's room, and found him occupied with two gentlemen. Upon seeing Sir Edmund, he turned to them, as if the new-comer's appearance was a fortunate accident, and said: "Ah, that's lucky, now here's Hornsby himself." Introduced him to a peer and an M.P., both well-known evangelists, and proceeded:—

"Hornsby, these two gentlemen have a terribly long complaint against you. Now they will tell you what it is about better than I can, although I have read through a dozen letters on the subject, and you'll have to clear yourself. Now, gentlemen, don't mind me and give it him." I really forget which of us looked most astonished. However, they began, but I must say with a little show of apology, and a formidable catalogue of high crimes and misdemeanours they produced, which, however, were half ridiculous gross exaggerations and misstatements, literal perversion of facts . . . Moreover, all the most important ones I had reported on at the time of their occurrence, and these Mr. Hammond, on being called up by Lord Palmerston, said he had at the time sent on to the Secretary of the Society for any observations he might make on them, but none had been made. This settled the matter, and Lord Palmerston gave my friends a bit of his mind, who thereupon retired—not, however, before they shook hands with me. Then Lord Palmerston turned to me and said, "You do not mind my not warning you; but I thought it best that these fellows should have the explanation from your own lips, as I felt certain that these charges were a pack of lies." (p. 186.)

Of the aptitude and readiness of the Chinese to learn, he gives several remarkable instances. In the Fives and Tennis Courts, the Chinese markers could give the best players twenty-five per cent and beat them. The club billiard-marker played an excellent game, but naturally, was too diplomatic to

beat his masters. But when a crack player from a Hong Kong regiment, who could give any of our men fifty and beat them, came up to Shanghai, this marker played several matches with him and beat him easily.

It was the same at cricket. A lot of Chinese "boys" were employed, during practice, running after balls, and no doubt they practiced among themselves on the sly. In a match got up between a good eleven, these "little half-naked rascals beat the players hollow." And Sir Edmund declares his belief: "I really do not believe there is anything which requires skill rather than strength that a Chinaman cannot do as well as a European." Doubtless the time will come when a Chinese cricket team will tour the country like the Australians do now, and a Chinese Tennis champion carry everything before him. Of the Ningpo wood-carvers, he says: "give the carvers a design, and, no matter how elaborate it is, they will do it as well as any European workman. I have seen a large sideboard carved by them that would have done credit to the great G. Gibbon himself."

There are, of course, bad men in China, as everywhere else, but he is inclined to think that "there is less serious crime in China than in most civilized countries." (p. 284). Sir Edmund made the acquaintance of "Chinese Gordon, in London, just before setting out for China, and Gordon, very kindly, made him a present of a house-boat in China, also of a bungalow he had built out there, which he could have at his own price, and offered to lend him a perfect copy of the *Chinese Repository* to read on the voyage. But unfortunately, says Sir Edmund:—

The house-boat I found he had already given away thrice before I claimed it. The bungalow had been sold, and the purchase money remitted to him. The books never reached me. He imagined some weeks afterwards that I had bagged them, wrote me several angry letters. At last I asked a friend to search his rooms, the result being that they were found in an old tea-chest under his bed, addressed to me at Marseilles. This brought me a long letter of apologies. I had known a little of him when he was a cadet at Woolwich, even then he was a peculiar wayward youngster. All the same he was a good guerilla chief, except that he had a conscience and a very prickly one. He was also a strict disciplinarian, although I imagine not in any way amenable to discipline himself. I do not wish in any way to belittle Gordon's fame, but he was an obstinate man, having a very mean opinion of other people's advice or experience, and the last man I should have chosen to employ in an independent position where I could not get at him. (p. 194.)

As Consular Judge in Turkey, his duties took him to Jerusalem, of which he remarks: "It is difficult to believe that the neighbourhood of Jerusalem was ever a land flowing with 'milk and honey.' It is now, or at least was when I saw it, a land covered with stones about the size of one's head, with here and there a cleared patch in which a few struggling cornstalks were labourously trying to grow, and a few vegetables. Some half-starved sheep grazed amongst the stones; a more arid desolate country could hardly be imagined." (p. 135.) As regards the "Holy Places," he says: "All the Turks did was to place a few policemen inside the gate of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre with kourbashes (whips) to keep the monks of the different Christian churches from cutting each other's throats whenever they met—and this they did with notable force and impartiality." (p. 80.)

In this building, says Sir Edmund; "are crowded, without the slightest reference to probability or even possibility, the sites of the principal events of Scrip-

ture history." A small chamber excavated in the rocky foundation of the building, is stated to be the Lord's Sepulchre. "It is clearly not," says Sir Edmund; "but it matters little, since the Christian world had unanimously decided that it is, and to it flock pilgrims of all denominations from all parts." (p. 136.) What a divine spectacle! A fraudulent tomb over which fanatical Christians are only prevented from cutting one another's throats by the whips of the Infidel Turkish policeman! Behold the blessings of religion! What should we do without it?

W. MANN.

The Mistakes of Science.

(Paper read at the Annual Conference of the National Secular Society.)

Of all the methods which Religion has employed, on the intellectual side, in the effort to meet the steady challenge of scientific progress, perhaps the best from the standpoint of popular appeal is that of dwelling upon and enlarging the mistakes of Science. We all understand the story of the mote and the beam just as we all appreciate the significance of glass houses; and the moral in each case is one that will evoke a sympathetic response in almost every nature. Here then is a good vantage-point from which to launch a religious offensive. Science, since her earliest days, has occupied herself with an uninvited and equally unwelcome attention to the religious mote. Devoting her life thus to the consideration of other people's mistakes, has she none of her own to attend to? To be sure. The mistakes of Science! There is something arresting about the phrase; it suggests the prospect of a novel inquiry. Here we are living in a scientific age. The name of Science has become a household word. The "eminent scientist" who figures so frequently in the Sunday journals is a sort of modern-day Oracle of Delphi. So intoxicated has the world become with the idea of salvation by science that we are well nigh incapable of imagining such a thing as scientific error. Is it possible that, after all our idol stands on feet of clay?

Altogether captured by the journalistic possibilities of this avenue of thought, Mr. Gerald Gould not very long ago attacked the subject in the *Sunday Chronicle*. One by one he set about the great scientists of the past, and when he had finished with these austere figures, the columns of the *Chronicle* were strewn with amputated clay feet. He showed us how the cherished truths of one generation became discarded errors in the next; how the history of Science had been a history of revised conclusions; and he indicted the "most unkindest cut of all" when he pointed finally to the invulnerable Newton, whose armour had seemed proof against all weapons for all time, only to tell us that it had been pierced at last by the keen shafts of Einstein's mathematics.

What conclusions, then, were we to draw from all this? Surely, that Science, like all other institutions in life, was fallible. Everywhere we found mistakes, and Science was no exception. We must therefore take her with the proverbial pinch of salt, and so avert the danger of that form of scientific tyranny which, as Mr. Gould contended, was threatening the world.

There, ladies and gentlemen, you have the position which I wish briefly to attack in the present paper.

Before expounding the several points of criticism (few enough, you will be pleased to hear, and sufficiently definite to lend themselves to argument), whether or not he intended to be so, he succeeds in assuming that whatever serves to discredit Science

serves to uphold Religion—an aspect of the matter which Religionists are very quick to perceive. Viewing Mr. Gould's article then, as we must, in this light it possesses the two features proper to its type: firstly it is plausible, and secondly it is misleading. Its prima facie plausibility will be apparent to you at a glance; its misleading character I wish to discuss under three heads:—

Firstly, what is the difference between the religious and scientific attitude towards a mistake?

Secondly, what is the difference in the nature of religious and scientific mistakes? and

Thirdly, what ought we to mean when we say that Science is mistaken?

In the course of this discussion it is hoped to establish:—

1. That mistakes in Science and in Religion are not at all on a par, and that we are not dealing with a simple affair of pot and kettle.

2. That, in any case, the statement that Science is mistaken conveys a totally wrong impression of the true position.

To begin, then, with the question of attitude; a mistake, to Science, is something to be quickly discovered and just as quickly rectified. Moreover, scientists must discover their own mistakes, since there is no one to do so for them. The consequence is that mistakes in Science are invariably detected by scientific men working by scientific methods. You never heard of a scientific error that was discovered in the pulpit. It may have been related in the pulpit; but that is quite another matter. On the other hand a mistake, to Religion, is not something to be exposed; the exposure of it is a heresy to be extirpated. The very idea of a religious mistake is paradoxical, for religion rests upon revelation, and there is no room for error in revelation. But in point of fact Religion stands convicted of the grossest blunders by the verdict of sober experience. What then are we to say of the priest? Surely, that he cannot correct his mistakes because he cannot or dare not admit them. And what of the scientist? Surely, that it is he who deserves our confidence, not because he cannot make mistakes, but because he is not bound by the nature of his doctrine to perpetuate them.

Now let us look at the mistakes themselves. Is there any essential difference between a scientific and a religious mistake? I submit that there is, and that it depends upon the difference between scientific and religious truth. A scientific truth is a representation of things which squares with experience. When the range of experience is widened you may find that the old representation of things no longer tallies with the new and extended range of experience. The old representation is then said to be true only for the old range of experience, and in so far as the new representation covers a larger field, the old one is said to be mistaken. But that is a queer sort of mistake, is it not? It is rather of the nature of a truth too limited to be of continued utility. It is out of date, like a hansom cab. But, like the hansom cab, it still has a limited sphere of usefulness; and in this sphere it is still honoured by the name of truth. If you look into the history of scientific mistakes you will find that the majority of them are of this kind, and often they are found to be out of date only in relation to ultra-modern requirements. Newton's "mistake," quoted with such gusto by Mr. Gould, most certainly belongs to this class. Newtonian physics and geometry still suffice for anyone but a man riding on a beam of light. The Newtonian universe embraces even Sir Henry Seagrave.

With religious mistakes the case is necessarily

different, for religious truth is said to be absolute. That conveys to us a representation which is true for all time and under all conditions, because its truth depends upon neither time nor condition. If that sort of truth turns out to be a mistake there is no way out; it is what the schoolboys call a "howler." You cannot speak of it in terms of degree, nor is it relative to a sphere of usefulness. Its pretensions preclude such a defence. It is the Holy Word or nothing.

And now to the third and last aspect of the matter, for it is here that we encounter the really misleading part of Mr. Gould's presentation of the case. When he spoke of the "mistakes of Science," he should have said "mistakes in the course of Science." Let me explain by introducing a somewhat fanciful simile.

Picture a fairy castle hidden in the fastnesses of a great mountain; and in that castle, locked in a secret room, a fairy princess called Truth. Two princes from a foreign land have journeyed forth to seek and wed her, and their names are Knowledge and Faith. After many hardships by the way they arrive at length outside the door of her chamber. Faith murmurs "Open Sesame"! Knowledge, spying a bunch of keys hanging by the portal, seizes them and presses the first key in the lock. One by one he tries them without success, until at the seventh attempt the door flies open and he bursts into the room. There at the base of an empty throne lies the hem of a white garment, and on it is written this message:—

With the keys that hang outside
Thou wilt find thy fairy bride.

Now, Ladies and Gentlemen, had Mr. Gould been telling us this story he would have said, when knowledge tried the first key in the lock, that he was mistaken. But how misleading that would have been! He was mistaken in one sense; he had hold of the wrong key. But he was right in by far the more important sense; he had hold of the right notion—the notion that it *was* a key that would open the door, and that the only question was, which key? Moreover, by that correct idea of things he was enabled to recover from his initial error. The case with Science is precisely similar. The notion underlying all her activities in the quest for truth is that of natural causation and natural law. She may try the wrong key in many a lock; she may cite the wrong cause or enunciate the wrong law. But she never abandons the idea that there *is* a cause, and that there *is* a law, and only by her adherence to this idea is she enabled to recover from initial errors. When therefore we speak of Science as being mistaken, if we do not mean that she is mistaken in this we mean nothing of any significance. In particular, we mean nothing that has a vital bearing upon the religio-scientific conflict, for it has never been claimed that mistakes did not occur *in the course* of science. What has been claimed is that Science—in the broad sense, embodying essentially the conceptions of natural causation and natural law—continues to be true in the light of experience and by the tests of commonsense. And this is, and must remain, the fundamental issue between the disputants.

An article such as Mr. Gould's, therefore, turns out after all to be a mere panorama of red herrings. It may engage the attention, or even excite the interest, of those who have a taste for this type of aquarium; but let us hope that, in the conflict between the past and present interpretations of the world, such a distraction will not succeed in deflecting the vision of those who understand what Science as an institution really means.

C. H. ROSS CARMICHAEL.

Propaganda Work in Soviet Russia.

THE exact manner and methods of propaganda work in Soviet Russia depends upon the members of the Atheist clubs and the local circumstances, each group working out its own methods. Generally, however, the work done for the Freethought Movement is closely connected with the work on the political side. It is quite different to the case in England, where politics are not the concern of the Freethought world. Here the men and women who still uphold their religious ideals are the enemies of the existing political system, and under the disguise of religious work are engaged in working against the present political powers. This makes it necessary for the political power to combine anti-religious work very closely with political work, and the future of the country, in the eyes of the political body, depends upon the close co-operation of the Atheist Movement with the political side.

In the villages the Atheist Union Branch works by means of easily recognized methods towards socialistic ends. For example, there will be members organizing agricultural experiments, model farms and teaching the peasants in co-operative methods, and every success is naturally made a piece of propaganda for "Atheist" methods. To understand this, you must remember that there are still peasants who pray to God for rain and sunshine. So each success in material things is made the point of Atheist propaganda, and the results of thus combining political and Atheist work have had very great success.

Also, we consider that the propagation of Atheism is not the task of merely the Atheist Union, but of all the people. The Atheist Union is only the leader. Following out this idea the Atheist groups often arrange different forms of propaganda with other bodies such as the trade-unions, International Workers' Help Association, and others. During the day devoted to international co-operation festivities, we arrange with the co-operative bodies to propagate secular ideas amongst the religious co-operators. There is one great difference between the English propaganda work and the Russian. Ours is always socially directed to the mass, individual work is carried on, but not on the scale of the mass readings, mass film propaganda, mass processions, rambles, anti-religious carnivals, etc. To effect this we have to prepare very carefully. Every group of the Atheist Union arranges anti-religious study circles in the factory, the village, the office, etc. On a larger scale there are the summer schools, courses to prepare the necessary reports and statistics and courses to instruct lecturers and leaders of the study groups.

By thus organizing in local groups we can use every incident or every example that comes our way. We carefully point out the influence of religion on professional and technical problems, demonstrate the effect of freedom from religious ties on the labourer, and not only reach the literate worker, but what is more important, the worker who is not necessarily a student, but who can learn from practical experience.

N. INCERTOV.
(Englished L. CORINNA.)

Moscow.

The Heights.

My love is like the mountain-height, so changeful in the distance;

At dawn a jewel radiant on the day's exuberant breast;
At eve a dear companion, with a subtle sweet insistence,
Alluring to the summit for an hour of Rest.

My love is like yon' secret star, that gleameth high above me,

Far o'er the mountain summit I behold it, bright with hope;

So, yearning for the moment when her lips shall lean to love me,

My feet in adoration tread the verdant slope!

J. M. STUART-YOUNG.

Acid Drops.

Father Hays, Roman Catholic, says that the religion which rules out mysteries and miracles because they are incomprehensible is doomed to dissolution. If Father Hays values our agreement we desire to assure him that he has it. We have said many times that to understand a religion is to kill it. The only religion that can live is one that cannot be understood, for that is the only religion that cannot be disproved.

English religionists and others should make a special note of the Pope's statement that the task of education belongs to the Church and not to the State. That is what the Church in this country is trying to get—control over education, with the State paying the bill.

The Archbishop of Canterbury says that it would not matter to the Church whether it were disestablished or not. But it would be a step towards the secularization of the State, and that would be bad for the country. How very disinterested! And how curious it is that the road to national betterment should so perpetually be that which also favours ecclesiastical power and financial gain! It is quite a dispensation of Providence.

A party of 405 sick persons left for Lourdes from this country on June 10. Apparently not one of this lot has enough common sense to ask why, if the Lord can cure them of their ailments, he cannot do it as well here as compel them to travel all the way to Lourdes! Yet we call ourselves civilized—and all these people have votes!

"Until we learn the use of living words we shall continue to be waxworks inhabited by gramophones," says Mr. Walter de la Mare. For our part, we see small chance of improvement while the waxworks manufacturers—the churches, chapels, and Sunday schools—continue in business, not to mention the popular newspapers.

A religious weekly says that "differences of political theory are of value because they keep healthy discussion and criticism alive." Our friend should be careful. By a parity of reasoning, different notions about religion may be valuable for the same reason. And that being admitted, our friend may be expected to agree that discussion and criticism of religion by Freethinkers is of value also.

Mr. J. D. Beresford says: "Our machines are works of genius, but our social and humanitarian attempts are more or less bungling." Possibly the cause of that bungling may be found in the fact that social and humanitarian attempts are based on stupid Christian theories, instead of on reason and reflection.

The Churches are preparing to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the starting of Sunday schools by Robert Raikes. If the present decline in attendance at these schools should continue, the next celebration will conclude with a reading of the burial service. Originally, Sunday schools were used for imparting knowledge to the illiterate, but they soon became used solely for disseminating religion. Another victory for Jesus.

Of a Presbyterian local preacher in North Shields and Haltwhistle, it is said that he has travelled 2,500 miles and preached 2,000 sermons. Thank heaven someone is sure of everlasting bliss for a misspent life.

A religious weekly says that the President of the Baptist Union has commenced his campaign among Baptist churches in the villages and small towns. His purpose is to bring to scattered and sometimes spirited churches a message of hope and encouragement. Per-

haps this will start a new fashion. Will all our pastors and ministers exchange pulpits for the purpose of cheering up each other's despondent congregations?

The Bishop of Plymouth said recently, that if one sets out to make children little Conservatives or little Socialists, or little Anglicans or Methodists, one is starting with a false conception of education. Nevertheless, the Bishop will, we fancy, still remain a staunch believer in special schools for little Anglicans. Nor will he object to the cost of such schools being borne entirely by the generality of ratepayers, which includes Roman Catholics, Nonconformists, Jews, and Atheists.

Mrs. Corbett Ashby, at Hendon, said that education should be less directed to getting a certain amount of information into a child's head before it leaves school, but rather to awakening a kind of scientific curiosity that would awaken the child's interest in anything it might meet with later on. This is sound enough so far as it goes. The child also needs to know how to deal intelligently and logically with what it sees, hears, and reads. There is still room in the school curriculum for teaching to think. This may not be necessary in Churches and Sunday schools, but it is essential in the State schools aiming at producing intelligent citizens.

In connexion with broadcast religious services, the Rev. R. H. Brown, of the *Methodist Recorder*, sees danger ahead for his profession. He warns his readers that no able-bodied man can substitute broadcast services in his home for attendance at public worship, without his experiencing a real and definite spiritual loss. Public worship provides fellowship with fellow-Christians—communion with men as well as with God. Listening-in is a lazy thing to do. It is selfish and unworthy, and undermines the listener's sense of personal responsibility. Why? Oh, the listener gets his "spiritual entertainment for nothing, he is left free to escape all financial appeals. He pays nothing towards the cost of the proclamation of the Gospel, and shakes off all responsibility for the maintenance of the religious ordinance of the community." From this the reader can see that Mr. Brown and his fellow parsons have a very real grievance against the B.B.C. If pious listeners won't come and commune with the church collection-bag, what will happen to the parson? Mr. Brown has, at the back of his mind, a gloomy vision of the workhouse. So, after all, the B.B.C. is really doing a grave disservice to religion. In their haste to exploit broadcasting, the parsons have unwittingly hindered the flow of cash into their collection-boxes! Will there be a parsonic petition soon to stop broadcasting religion? The parsons certainly can make out a good case for its cessation.

Mr. Brown has also another good reason for attending church rather than listening-in. The Christian owes it to the community to which he belongs, to move through the streets to a house of God on Sunday. Every face turned churchwards leaves an impression on the life of the town. It reminds men of the sanctity of the Sabbath, and of God for whom the day has been set apart. On the other hand, every motor-car, tennis-racket, or bag of golf clubs carried through the streets on Sunday works for evil, says Mr. Brown, by banishing from men's minds the memory that Sunday is a holy day. According to this, then, Freethinkers can do a small bit for the cause of anti-religion by taking care to let the world see that they are going forth to enjoy themselves on Sunday. A final wail from Mr. Brown is that if no one goes to Church, and everybody does no more than listen to a broadcast service, public worship will cease, and spiritual Christianity will gradually fade away. How pathetic that is! But Mr. Brown might here put the real grounds of his complaint in the question, "If men stay away from Church, what is to become of the parson?"

Says Dean Inge: "The modern world belongs to the half-educated, a rather difficult class, because they do not

realize how little they know." Still, the modern world might be worse. It might belong to the wholly Christian, a rather stupid class, because they imagine they, with the help of God, knew everything worth knowing.

Mr. Epstein's new sculpture, symbolizing Night, for the Underground, has excited much controversy. The only fault we can find in regard to it is that it is on the wrong building. It ought to be affixed to a Christian cathedral, and be called "Night—the domination of mind by the Christian Church."

We gather from a religious weekly that the new Cabinet is preponderatingly godly. One member, described as Puritan at heart, is writing a Life of John Knox. Another refreshes his mind by singing hymns to his wife's accompaniment. A third is an energetic lay-preacher and Brotherhoodite. The next, a lady, gets enjoyment from reading the lives of the saints. Another has been a vicar-general in the Church of England. A sixth member, an ardent chapel-goer, believes that Christ's teaching must be accepted literally as a guide for conduct in social matters. Another is spiritually qualified to be a member of a monastic order. And a few more have "trained their intellects"—we like that—in Scottish village Kirks or Welsh chapels. We hope all this is not actually true. If it is the new Cabinet will need very careful watching.

Some combined "Youth departments" of seven Free Churches have been anxiously probing the problem of the "alienation between youth and the Church," and have issued a pamphlet setting forth causes and cures. The main causes are declared to be: (1) defective training in religion in the home, Sunday school, and the world at large; (2) the Churches use language that is out of date; (3) they lack the spirit of adventure; and (4) they exaggerate the importance of denominationalism. The remedies suggested are: (1) a revision of existing forms of worship; (2) conferences and campaigns for the young by the young; and (3) further recognition of the young people and their societies as a real part of the Church. These inspired remedies admirably suit the alleged causes. And no doubt the alienated young people will soon be rushing back into the Churches—when they have got tired of using Sunday as a day of rest and recreation. But our Christian friends must exercise patience. The "rush-back" won't happen just yet.

At Peebles, for the past six years, there has been an agitation to obtain permission for Sunday boating on the Tweed, but during all that time such a proposal has been a thing accursed to the powers that be until now. At last, after they had been told by one of their number that he did not think it right that Councillors should be able to motor where they willed whilst the mill-workers were denied the use of their own river, the Peebles Council agreed to permit Sunday boating—by a vote of six for and five against. How that minority have been able to grip the town in the past! What a weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth there will be in the tin tabernacle of Friern Barnet and Peebles. Can't you conjure up visions of the awful immorality that will become the bane of both places? Will even the Registrar-General be able to count the number of illegitimate children who will see light as a result of this tennis and boating? But the Stiggins's have a greater shock still to come. Their poor brethren in America are to receive even greater persecution!

Many trustees of schools in Texas can neither read nor write, so a Bill has just been passed by the United States House of Representatives, making it a necessary qualification for school trusteeship that the holder of the office must be able to do these two things. Now, friends, I must ask you what is going to be the dire and dread result of this revolutionary measure? A conglomeration of states which could produce a "Monkeyville" must surely realize the awful danger of an action such as this.

Just think how terrible it will be if, instead of reciting memorized passages from the Bible, a few of these trustees read the paper in which their molasses were wrapped, and that paper happened to be the *Freethinker*. Again, suppose that, instead of merely listening to the Bible, they are tempted to read it for themselves and so find out all the inaccuracies and obscenities. The prospect is too sad to contemplate, my brothers, so we'll turn to another page for comfort, and come back to dark, dreary and illiterate England again.

At Aller, in Somerset, a farmer complained in the local court that a neighbour had bewitched him. The newspaper comments on this to the effect that those who fondly imagine that we live in an age of reason should give due attention to this item. An "age of reason," forsooth! Give it due attention then, and what do we find but that the farmer was taking the whole of his Bible as the truth? Is that any reason for derision from fellow Christians? Is there any greater cause for wonder in one man believing in witches and their craft than there is in thousands believing in transubstantiation? Is there any difference between the use of supernatural powers by a witch and by a priest?

It is difficult for a parson to keep to the truth where religion is concerned. The Bishop of Kensington told a Westminster audience the other day that the King had intimated how much he owed to the prayers of his people. We do not know that it would matter very much if he had done so, since the King's opinion on that topic is of as much value as that of any sucking curate. But the King deliberately said that he owed his recovery to the skill of his doctors and the kindness of his nurses. It is also quite evident that prayers have not been effective in his case, since there has been a rather serious relapse. Perhaps the Lord was engaged in paying attention to the prayers issued by the Archbishop of Canterbury at a penny a dozen.

We understand that an election petition is on foot, founded on the action of a Roman Catholic priest who stood outside a polling booth in Liverpool, ordering his flock how to vote. Of course, it is quite impossible to prevent a priest doing the same thing from the pulpit, but one may count on it that every Roman Catholic priest, whenever there is anything to be gained by his church from an election, will order his dupes how they are to vote, and the majority will lack the courage to disobey. The ballot is, of course, secret, and it is a commentary on the amount of real freedom existing that it should have to be so.

The Rev. Dr. Selbie says there would be no problem of evil if man were merely a cog in a wheel or part of a mechanism. That is quite a clumsy and wrong way to put it. There is no problem of evil at all unless one believes in a God who created the world with power and wisdom enough to make it otherwise. Then one asks why such a being should act in such a way. And whether man is a cog in a wheel or not, so long as there is a God responsible for what it is, the problem remains. It is a problem that owes its origin to a foolish assumption. Without that man is not called upon to explain why things exist, but just to deal with them as he finds them.

Of Sir Chas. Trevelyan, the new President of the Board of Education, the *Teachers' World* says, he is convinced that the new political power of democracy is fraught with danger, unless it is fortified and balanced by a comprehensive scheme of physical, intellectual, and moral training. Sir Charles may be right. But we dare say he, in practice, will make the same mistake as his predecessors in office—that of imagining that instruction is the fundamentals of Christian belief constitutes "moral training." Future generations will smile pityingly at this illusion.

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.

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J. E. SMEDLEY.—We have dealt so frequently of late with the Church and the schools, that we were giving the subject a rest for a few weeks. The Vicar of Hucknall's claim that the Church established schools because it was interested in the education of the children is the kind of falsehood that is quite regular in Christian circles. The church built schools only to prevent other schools getting hold of the child. Its whole aim was to breed the particular brand of Christian that suited its own line of business.

J. H. BLACK.—Thanks. Shall appear.

C. W. MARSHALL.—Pleased to hear from you. If everyone did their "little best" for the cause we should be quite content. Unfortunately so many are content to sit quiet and reap the benefit of other's efforts.

E. C. ASHWORTH.—Quite the usual evasive reply. No one says that Catholic parents have not the right to educate their children in what religion they please. But what the Catholic demand is that the cost of that education shall be borne by those who do not believe in Roman Catholicism, but regard it as the greatest disaster that can overtake any country.

S. WILSON.—We may deal with Professor Eddington's lecture next week. In any case, soon, but there is no immediate hurry.

A. WAINWRIGHT.—You can have a parcel of *Freethinkers* for distribution whenever you care to apply for them. We are always pleased to send on back numbers for that purpose.

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.

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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 see that the legality of any Sunday entertainment to which admission is by money is to be tested by the Lord's Day Observance Society, and in the interests of Sabbatarianism. We are glad to see this, as it seems impossible to get the Cinema proprietors and others to overcome their fear of the bigots to the extent of challenging the Act. If the Lord's Day Observance challenge the legality of Sunday entertainments, we fancy they will win, since the Act is very clear on this point.

We have said, over and over again, that when Magistrates give permission to this or that theatre or cinema to open on Sunday, and decline to give it in others, they are exercising a power that is not theirs. The Act makes it quite clear that any entertainment to which admission is by money is illegal, and it is ridiculous to imagine that any magistrate may at his own discretion suspend an act of Parliament. Every place of entertainment that is so open is open to an indictment, and when magistrates are asked to refuse permission, proprietors should simply tell the magistrates to go to the devil and do just as they please. They lay themselves open to persecution, but if the fight was kept up it means the repeal of the Act. It is for this reason that Sabbatarians have been slow to bring an action on their side, although recent events have driven them to the step.

The Secret of the passivity of the Cinema proprietors is the petty persecution carried on by religious police officials, and pious Watch Committees. They threaten proprietors with opposition to their licence, or vexatious enforcements of their powers if Sunday opening is permitted, and the threatened ones give way. We have had that experience with licenced buildings that have been let for our meetings, and we know well what we are talking about. We can only add that if the L.D.O.S. bring the action we hope they will win. Then we may see the Act abolished altogether.

The *Revolt* of India reprints in a recent issue our "Views and Opinions" on "God and the King." Suitable acknowledgment is made.

Mr. Clayton sends us good reports of his meetings in the Burnley district. Mr. Clayton is carrying the message of Freethought into many new districts, and deserves the help of any local Freethinkers who have the time and inclination to attend the meetings. Particulars will be found in the Lecture Guide Column.

Mr. J. Brighton sends us good reports of meetings held by himself and others in the Chester-le-Street district. He has held some good meetings in West Stanley, and we know there are quite enough Freethinkers in that neighbourhood to build up a very strong Branch of the N.S.S.

Braham was once at a party where Catalani, the famous singer, and a well known bishop were also guests. His Lordship expressed his wish to be introduced to her. This was done with extraordinary solemnity, the bishop advancing graciously, when suddenly Catalani ran forward, and with a scream of laughter, seized the bishop's apron, exclaiming: "Oh, my God! vat is dis leetle black ting?"—*Once a Week.*

Masterpieces of Freethought.

VII.—GENESIS.

By CHARLES BRADLAUGH.

I.

THERE seems to be a tradition—I heard it when I first joined the Freethought Party—that while Charles Bradlaugh was a wonderful orator, one of the greatest of his age, he was a very poor writer. This seems to me to be one of those unfair generalizations difficult to confute in a sentence. Bradlaugh wrote for over thirty years for his paper *The National Reformer*, under, very often, worrying circumstances besides a large number of pamphlets, theological and political, and a number of full-sized books. It is absurd to imagine any man turning out the mass of work he did being a very bad writer. To compare him with Foote or Huxley is most unjust, for it invites the retort that after all, how many people can write like Foote or Huxley? The first editor of this paper was a man with a wonderful taste in literature, and his own writings will bear comparison with that of the great masters. They had rhythm and selection, for Foote instinctively knew the right word, and I am told by those who had the privilege of setting up his copy that he rarely blotted out a word or a line. Behind Foote's simplicity was, in short, genius, and it is a tragedy that he was not acknowledged during his lifetime. But Christians never forgave his onslaught on their creed, and they never understood his splendid tolerance when he showed his delight in Newman or Hooker. The man who could write English was the man for Foote, whatever his creed. As for Huxley, it is not too much to say that no writer on scientific subjects ever turned out better prose than the great Agnostic. We may differ from him in many points, but the clear and sonorous sentences of his essays have a magnificent ring and dignity. I have always felt that not even John Henry Newman at his best could equal Thomas Henry Huxley at his best.

Thus to compare Bradlaugh with two giants is positively unfair. What he did was to write clearly, forcibly, and concisely. No frills or flourishes. No padding but the simple direct story as he saw it, and I claim he was a master at his own method. Take his *Plea for Atheism*. I doubt whether anyone could better this short pamphlet if they had to re-write it. Indeed, I often wonder whether that terrific big gun *The System of Nature* has really demolished the God idea more effectively.

Bradlaugh has got together the rock bottom arguments, so to speak, of Atheism in his small work, and anyone who masters them will have no difficulty in polishing off most present-day Theists. No scientific discovery has touched them in the least, simply because they are fundamental.

Almost all his writing contains this quality of directness, of intimacy with his subject, and of his clear and logical reasoning powers. And sometimes—may I admit it—I am glad we get no Ruskin-esque asides of laborious and wordy descriptions of sunset in the mountains or over wonderful seas.

And now let us turn to *Genesis*. I wonder how many who are reading these pages, have read this work? It must seem to most Freethinkers, to have been useless labour for, after all, the fight against *Genesis* as a divine revelation is surely won. Nobody believes in Adam and Eve as real people, or the stories of Eden, the Flood, or the long-lived patriarchs. Biblical criticism has overwhelmed the first book of the Bible. Well, this is so, but we are apt to forget that books like *Genesis* did its work in the fight. To understand it properly, one must picture

what the England of Bradlaugh was like when he was lecturing and debating up and down the country. Belief in the Bible as God's Holy Book was almost universal. I am willing to admit, of course, that there were always "backsliders" among Christians and there must have been crowds quite indifferent to the consolations of religion. But let one glance at the long list of weekly and monthly journals published regularly during the middle of last century, and almost without exception, their principal characteristic was an intensely religious tone. Nearly all prizes given in schools dealt with religion, either in the realm of fiction or fact. The novels of Emma Jane Worboise and Hesba Stretton, and those of many other religious ladies had huge circulations. To call oneself an Atheist evoked such symptoms of horror, that even Freethinkers like Tyndall and Huxley indignantly repudiated the term. Hundreds of thousands of tracts showing the awful results of infidelity were showered on unfortunate householders, or given away in the streets. Every word of *Genesis* was looked upon as absolutely true by Protestants and Catholics alike, and mild heretics like Bishop Colenso were attacked with almost unbelievable ferocity by their Brothers in Christ.

Of course Paine and the works of other Freethinkers were circulated but very warily. To say one had a copy of Tom Paine at home was like saying one had a copy of the works of the Devil. A man had to think of his livelihood and his neighbours, whatever he might really think about the Bible, and in any case Freethought literature never had the circulation of Christian literature. It required a very brave man to face the religious bigotry and fanaticism of mid-Victorian days—though the rack and the stake were things of the past; and many of us, secure in a freedom perhaps undreamt of by those brave pioneers, sometimes are apt to speak scornfully of "Bible banging"—meaning the criticism which helped to place definitely the Book of *Genesis* as myth and legend. Bradlaugh attacked the Bible because, like Paine, he saw it was still the great fetish of the mass of his fellow-countrymen. As early as 1856, he had published *The Bible, What it is?* in which he collected together the results of his reading of a great many commentators, and his work went as far as Isaiah.

Mr. J. M. Robertson, in that splendid part 2 of the biography of Charles Bradlaugh—in passing, may I point out that I consider this one of the finest things Mr. Robertson has ever written?—tells us that this edition is so scarce that he has never been able to get a copy. Bradlaugh rewrote it in 1865, and though much enlarged, this time he only got through the Pentateuch. This edition was then sold out and, I may add, is also very scarce. But in 1881-2, Bradlaugh, though in the very thick of fighting Parliament, set to work once more and calmly and methodically rewrote the whole book again, and in this 350 pages dealt only with the first eleven chapters of *Genesis*.

"The object of the work," he says in the preface, "is to show":—

1. That the Book of *Genesis* is unhistoric, that it is not the work of any one writer, but is made up of several documents, belonging to different ages, pieced together after the lapse of many centuries, often clumsily, and sometimes without regard to relevancy.
2. That the narrative is sometimes self-contradictory, and that it is often contradicted by other books of the Bible.
3. That its chronological statements are, on the face of them absurdly inaccurate, and that they are overwhelmingly contradicted by history and modern discovery.

4. That the Genesaic teachings on ethnology, geology, astronomy, zoology and botany, are flatly in opposition to the best knowledge in each of these sciences.
5. That such teachings of the book as relate to morality would be destructive of human happiness, if generally adopted.

Bradlaugh saw that Genesis was really the foundation of the Christian religion. How could there be a Saviour if there was no Fall of Man? And he quoted that great Sanscrit and Christian scholar, Sir William Jones: "Either the first eleven chapters of Genesis—all due allowances being made for a figurative Eastern style—are true or the whole fabric of our national religion is false." Christians nowadays can be found to disagree with Sir W. Jones, but most genuine believers and, in particular, the whole of the adherents to the Roman Catholic Church, must absolutely agree with him. In Bradlaugh's day, his book was necessary, and it would be difficult to believe that, amid all his troubles as editor of the *National Reformer*, parliamentary candidate, popular lecturer and debater, he ever managed to find the time to make his exhaustive inquiry into the credentials of Genesis, were his finished work not before us. He quotes nearly 150 authors, most of whom I know were in his own library, and though there may be some people unable to get through his wonderful commentary, I found it literally packed with interest and information.

H. CUTNER.

The Tactics of the Modern Sophist

(Concluded from page 375.)

BEFORE concluding these scattered observations I must refer to Mr. Joad's asseveration that Nature abounds with instances of "Something Created out of Nothing," which he exemplifies with the formation of water out of oxygen and hydrogen. He asks categorically "where did the wetness come from?" To which poser he replies with truly pontifical assurance "from nothing." Was ever language abused with more audacious assurance? If the substance or attributes of oxygen and hydrogen are nothing, most assuredly are also those of water "nothing." If the attributes of water are a "something," for the same reason are those of hydrogen and oxygen a "something." They are of the same order in the most absolute sense. Their physical state *i.e.*, whether they are solid, liquid, or gaseous depends entirely upon the susceptibility of the molecule to the influence of heat.

The mutual urge which exists between oxygen and hydrogen is simply modified in water through being satisfied. It is a modification of what existed, and not a creation out of nothing. The affinities which oxygen and hydrogen have for each other are "some things"—very real and potent—as any one who ever heard and saw them combine could never forget. What a travesty of truth to call that irresistible urge which drives them together, a "nothing" and to call the tame quiet product, water, a "something." For æons when this globe was in a state of incandescence, the water which makes up the oceans of the world had not even the quality of "wetness." Was it then a "something!"

Besides, what is called a quality or attribute is only a capacity either to affect our sense-organs or to be have in a particular manner towards other substances which our sense-organs and reason conjointly respond to.

Forty years ago I had a class lecture on the "enormous significance of chemical union." How

it modified, intensified, or reversed the power of its constituents to affect living tissue or sense-organ. And the facts I took to exemplify my subject were incomparably better suited to impress upon the mind of my pupils the paramount importance of that basic truth than the genesis of water from oxygen and hydrogen. This fundamental fact operates in every cell and gland of the animal body; for the value of the substance it secretes depends upon the *modification it effects* in the combining or catalytic power of its constituents. I took the five oxides of nitrogen: *nitrous oxide, nitric oxide, nitrogen trioxide, nitrogen peroxide (or dioxide), and nitrogen pentoxide.* You observe that they all consist of nitrogen and oxygen. But as this is not a class lecture, I shall refer to two only—*viz.*, to the first, nitrous oxide (N_2O), and to the fourth, nitrogen peroxide (NO_2). Now, the air we breathe consists of oxygen and nitrogen in an *uncombined* state; they are simply mixed together, like sand and sugar, in the proportion of one to four. This mixture of uncombined gases is our very breath of life. The properties of *free* nitrogen having no action upon our sense-organs or tissue. Nitrogen simply dilutes the oxygen and makes it more gentle and slow in action.

But let the two elements *combine* as in nitrous oxide. Though consisting of the very same elements only now in chemical union, its action upon living animal tissue is entirely changed. Instead of being the breath of life, it has become the breath of death. When breathed only a few times it produces insensibility, and is, on that account used by dentists as an anæsthetic. If mixed with oxygen and breathed, it causes hysterical laughter, hence its name of "laughing gas."

Instead of being odourless as its constituents are, it has a sweet smell. Why this change? Is it a "creation of something out of nothing?" Perish the madness! The why is obvious. They are no longer free atoms, but a little bundle or molecule of three atoms held together by their mutual affinity or urge. Their individual capacity to affect a sense-organ or tissue is therefore modified because they have to act together.

Each one of the remaining four oxides has different properties, simply because the number of atoms in the molecule differs or are in a different proportion. For example, in the case of nitrogen dioxide, we have one atom of nitrogen united to two atoms of oxygen, just the reverse, as we saw above, of what it is in nitrous oxide, in which two of nitrogen are united to one of oxygen. This change of proportion changes the properties of the product. It is a reddish brown gas with a most pungent smell; and is so poisonous that it may quickly give rise to septic pneumonia, though consisting of the very same elements as the breath of life! Absolutely no difference save the fact that they are now chemically united in a particular proportion. The last of the series—the pentoxide (N_2O_5)—is a heavy molecule, and affects our senses as a solid. Did this solidity come out of "nothing"!

No one surely, who reflects at all, can after this be in any doubt of the transcendent and far-reaching significance of chemical union; or can be gulled by such a fantastic will-o'-the-wisp as "the creation of something out of nothing."

There is just one other little matter I wish to advert upon before I bring these critical observations to a close. Mr. Joad, on page 26, admits the indisputable fact that we have no knowledge of life except in association with matter. "Why should this be?" he quite pertinently asks, and replies thus:

There are two possible answers. The first is that it is merely a coincidence though indefinitely re-

peated; yet only an accident that has no significance.

Mr. Joad continues: "this answer is possible, but scarcely conceivable." Though the high-browed metaphysician has always treated experience as of no value, yet I do not believe such an answer is at all possible, except on the hypothesis that the senses which Nature evolved are instruments of deception—a notion that is absolutely incompatible with the continued existence of animal life for countless æons of time as the express result of a behaviour that trusted them.

"The second supposition that matter and life are not in reality different, but that one is in fact the source of the other, or that both are the expression of some more ultimate principle"—this supposition Mr. Joad summarily rejects and categorically asserts that "they (life and matter) are two distinct and ultimate principles." In that passage it is implicitly assumed throughout that life like matter is an entity. "The creation of something out of nothing," is not after all quite so impossible! Life is a mere abstract term summing up the attributes of matter in a living state. It has never been isolated as an entity in the manner that matter is whenever a creature dies. Does then the phenomenon of life as exhibited by the body before death still exist in some form after that event. If it be an entity, as assumed, it must do so, for they separate simultaneously. In that case *where* is the life after isolation? Has it an *individuality* like the body? If it has, what determines it? It cannot be the delimitation of space, for it has no extension. What then delimits it? If it has no individuality, what is its nature, and how is it related to the animal body? And by what esoteric channels has he come to know of it? If these questions can be sanely answered, we can willingly accord the Joads of the world a respectful hearing; if not, I consider the postulate that life is an entity, the most fatuous piece of inanity ever propounded outside the bedlam of mythology and religious creeds.

Why not likewise treat Death as an entity? There is not an iota of difference. Death is the term denoting the *absence* of those attributes which characterize living organisms, while the term, life, denotes their *presence*. The Gnostics more consistently, did so: "O death where is thy sting, O grave where is thy victory."

In unsophisticated Nature, matter and energy are in the most intimate alliance, but in *The Meaning of Life*, Mr. Joad has emptied matter of all its energy. In the case of *living* matter, however, he belies Nature in a different way; Nature at death seems to empty the material body of all its living energy, whereas Mr. Joad, having decided that life is an entity, simply *divorces* them, not in perpetuity, I presume, but again to be reunited in some form of sophistic wedlock.

KERIDON.

THE IMAGE OF GOD!

Crawlin' about like a snail in the mud,
Covered wi' clammy blae,
Me, made after the image o' God—
Jings! but it's laughable tae.
Howkin' awa' 'neath a mountain o' stane,
Gaspin' for want o' air,
The sweat makin' streams doon my bare back bane,
And my knees a' hauckit and sair.
Strainin' and cursin' the hale shift thro',
Half starved, half blin', half mad;
And the gaffer he says, "Less dirt frae you,
Or you go up the pit, my lad!"
So I gi' my life to the Nimmo squad
For eicht and fower a day.
Me, made after the image o' God—
Jings! but it's laughable tae.

From Joe Corrie's Poems.

The World of Freethought.

ONE of the most pleasant experiences in this life must be that of a young Australian at school. Elementary schooling in Australia is free, obligatory and secular. In the State school or public schools the name of God must not be mentioned and no religion is allowed. There are, however, nevertheless, many religious sects in Australia, the strongest in organization being the Catholic Church, which are obliged to run and maintain their own schools if they wish to prevent their children from being inculcated with the vices of, according to the Catholics, Atheism, Freethought and criminality.

The representatives of every denomination can, if they so desire, attend the schools at certain hours outside curriculum, to instruct the children of those parents who desire religious instruction to be imparted, but no religious instruction is recognized by the State as part of the State duty towards the child, and any religious teaching must be done by the denominations when the State has released the child from the prescribed course of learning. The Churches, of course, look with horror upon this infidel proceeding, especially the Catholic Church, which maintains its own schools by its own money and efforts. The standard of education must be the same as that for the State schools. Naturally, the teachers for these schools must also be taught their profession in religious schools, and the Catholic Church spends enormous sums on the upkeep of its educational bodies. In addition, the individual members of the Catholic Church must pay the ordinary State taxes, both local and State, for the upkeep of the State schools. It is not often that they are thus caught helping the infidels! The majority of parliamentarians and the government officials are mostly of a tepid or no religious fervour, and are antagonistic, even when they are denominational men, to religious instruction in the State schools, and especially to Catholic religious instruction. The Catholics, being in a great minority amongst the Protestant population, have to bend the knee in many cases, but the standing matter of dispute is the question of paying the taxes for the upkeep of the State schools which the Catholics do not use. At the moment the Catholics do not appear to be likely to ever change the law on this matter, but they will if ever they have an opportunity.

During the last sitting of Parliament in Tasmania, the Prime Minister, a Catholic, and the Public Prosecutor joined forces to introduce a Bill to free all religious schools from the payment of State taxes, which go to uphold State schools, but the pro-Protestants and unimaginative, unthankful Upper House threw the Bill out.

At the present moment, in Tasmania, there are 31 primary and intermediary schools, colleges and gymnasiums with 180 professors and teachers of both sexes, teaching on behalf of the various denominations. The cost of this religious instruction amounts to £42,000 per year. The number of Catholic scholars in Tasmania is 3,513, and in Australia 195,295, the rest being sectarians of very decided Protestant denominations. The whole of the religious schools are subjected to severe superintendence by the State inspectors.

The Dutch Catholic National Party has now attained its desire for a National headquarters, with the subscriptions made to the fund in honour of Doctor Schaepman. Schaepman was the founder of the National Political Body within the Catholic realm of Holland, and besides an energetic worker on this field was one of the Catholic Dutch poets. The Catholic Party in Holland is a force to be reckoned with. Its numbers are given as 335,000 members, and it has 30 members in the Dutch Parliament, which is actually a third of the total membership of Parliament.

The whole political world is highly organized, and consists of 18 election bodies, and a party advisory committee of 90 delegates, and an executive of 21 members. There are 38 Catholic papers under its guidance, and it has to elect a central body from which the diverse wires of Catholic political work can be pulled. Naturally, it needs a central office to facilitate this great work.

In one of the aisles of the Jakob Church in Rothenburg, Germany, stands a little automatic machine with the inscription: "A peep at Jesus here you'll find, just put in a penny—or more." The Church has a face of brass and an unlimited maw when it comes to collecting the necessary.

To the churchmen at home, these missionaries were undoubtedly heroes, martyrs, crusaders, but to the selling fraternity, when it gathered nightly in the smoking-room for purposes of poker, they were "a damned nuisance," and when the preacher's latest prediction reached the group there was considerable comment.

"But take those two in the steerage," I protested one evening. "What privations may lie before them?"

"None whatever," grunted a man who had travelled extensively in the islands. "I wish I'd come out myself to sell the Gospel instead of the sewing machine. I'd probably have done better. That's the best business in Oceania to-day. Those South Seas are the preacher's happy hunting ground. The kanakas are simply nutty over religion, and thus the only time the devils'll work is when they want money to build a church."

You'll see for yourself when you get there. The whole Pacific is missionary-ridden nowadays. Oh, I don't say they clean up the cash themselves, mind you. If they belong to a society, they have to send it all home, so a lot more can come out. And fellows like that one in the steerage, who have a chance to "clear up, never seem to show any real business sense about it. But just the same, don't you waste any time pitying any of 'em. They're the little tin gods out here. And if that pair doesn't make out all right, just take it from me, it's going to be because there's too much competition in the South Seas already. They run the whole damned place."—Harry L. Foster in his book *A Vagabond in Fiji*. (Bodley Head Ltd.)

The Printers Association of Estonia, are agitating for the teaching of the international language, Esperanto, instead of religious instruction in the State schools.

The native Fijian is well cured of his barbarous beliefs, if statistics prove anything. The latest figures compiled by the Fijian Government show that in a population of 166,988, of which thousands are imported labourers from India, there are now 97,528 members of Christian denominations in the colony. To house their work, the Seventh Day Adventists have forty buildings and the Roman Catholics, not to be outdone, have 57. The Church of England, the Presbyterian, and most of the other known sects are represented by at least one each. And the Wesleyan Methodists, who lead by a long margin, are equipped with six European churches and 686 Fijian churches, and 394 other places where services are carried out.

After a long and bitter fight with the forces of reaction, the German Freethought Movement has just won a great victory by winning its case in the matter of a booklet *The Church in Caricature*, which has been banned for a year and a half on account of its alleged blasphemy.

Spring Song.

Oh, break in bud, my rose-tree,
The Spring will soon be here!
A gentle wind is waking
Our garden: Spring is near.
Ah! don't you feel a tender kiss,
A promise, kind and true?
The Spring, the Spring is coming soon,
And sends its love to you.

Oh, wake to joy, my dearest,
And take from me a flow'r!
It is my heart I give you,
As pledge of love's own hour.
Now hold the gift in happiness,
And know the world divine,
Because the Spring has brought me love,
Because your heart is mine!

J. M. STUART-YOUNG.

Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER." THE POPE AND RADIO.

SIR,—According to the press the Catholics of the United States are about to present the Pope with one of the most powerful radio installations in the world.

It is to be erected by American engineers, in the recently acquired Papal territory, and by its aid the voice of the holy father will be able to be heard by the faithful in the four quarters of the globe.

This is a marvel that our forefathers could hardly have imagined, much less believed, but it is a miracle of science due to the power of man's inventive brain, and not to the mouldy bone of some deceased saint. Could all the alleged miracles of the Church be taken and lumped together they would be insignificant in comparison with this miracle of man.

Let us suppose that by its spiritual powers the Church was able to produce such a wonder. What a support it would be to their authority, but they can't do it. What they claim to do is to liquify the blood of St. Janarius once a year in Naples, this is more in their line of business.

S. SODDY.

AGNOSTICISM AND ATHEISM.

SIR,—In yours of June 2, D. Matthews, Transvaal, writes on "Agnosticism and Freethought." I disagree with him when he says that "the term Agnosticism signifies either the desire to retain a certain air of respectability, or it implies sheer hypocrisy." It may, in certain people, imply these things, but, is there nothing else that it will imply?

I myself think that in certain cases it implies perfect honesty of expression, and an admixture of great common sense.

"I don't know," is in my opinion the best phrase for most people to use in connexion with these unknown matters. They are above and beyond us, and I believe, always will be. The word "Atheist," in my opinion, should never be used without qualifications; and strict definition each time.

"Secularist" and "Freethinker," suit my case, and I leave it there. They both express my meaning: "Atheist" does not. If not to believe that the Jehovah of Numbers xxxi., and the "God is Love" of the New Testament are one and the same "Loving Heavenly Father," is being an Atheist, then I am one and so with regard to a lot of other like things; but that is "Atheist" with a qualification. Mr. Matthews' idea of "Atheist" is a mix-up. It doesn't sufficiently define.

ROBERT ATIERTON.

A DICTIONARY OF SUPERSTITIONS.

SIR,—It is a sign of the times when one opens a dictionary of superstitions and find the word "God" in its proper place. The book I am referring to is *A Dictionary of Superstitions and Mythology*, by Biren Bonnerjea, published by the Folk Press, Ltd., at 15s.

The author tells us that he was making a comparative study of mythology and folklore, and began to collect notes, which gradually took the form of a dictionary, until he had the present book ready for the press.

He says truly that "A complete understanding of the gradual development of the human mind can be arrived at only by means of a study of the superstitions of the various nations. It is a well-known fact that the more advanced a nation is, the less superstitious are the people."

Later on, in his preface, the author declares: "It would be safe to assert that no matter how advanced the people are, there is not one nation in the world which is entirely free from superstitions of every kind."

A cursory glance at some of the entries without even troubling to read the definitions, shows that many Christian beliefs are classed as superstitious, viz., God, Balaam's Ass, devils, and heaven and hell. There are over forty thousand entries, and every Free thinker ought to have a copy of the dictionary, if only to see how strongly entrenched is superstition in the minds of men.

NECHILLS.

Society News.

MR. WHITEHEAD'S second week in Liverpool provided meetings as satisfactory as the first, with one exception, when rain prevented a start being made. Two meetings on Islington Square attracted sympathetic audiences, and many questioners, although, as usual, at this place rival meetings were in progress. Two meetings held in High Park Street brought the lecturer in contact with a different set of listeners, among whom was a well known gentleman, who expounded the pantheistic view of God providing considerable diversion during the process. A meeting held at Beaumont Street seemed to justify the decision of the Branch to concentrate local activities there. The Sunday meeting was held at Queen's Drive, and attracted still another type of audience and numerous inquiries.

Many *Freethinkers* and copies of the new leaflets were distributed. Altogether the fortnight at Liverpool passed off as harmoniously as possible, the amount of sympathy from the crowds at every meeting being remarkable in a city so overrun with religious bigotry as Liverpool. We have to thank for this assistance Miss Wilson, Mr. Ready and Mrs. Shortt, and especially Mr. Jackson, who carried the platform and took the chair at almost every meeting.

Until June 29, Mr. Whitehead will be lecturing every evening on the Town Hall steps, Bolton.

More Truth than Poetry.

I WANT to live a blameless life,
From every kind of folly free;
I'll not look at another's wife—
That is, if she looks good to me;
I'll be prepared to help to burn
All books but those the censors pass,
And I will do my best to learn
To be a sad and solemn ass.

I want to save my soul; I'm keen
To win a crown, a harp, and wings,
Therefore, I'll start at once to wean
Myself from liking lovely things;
The pleasures I have heretofore
Been tempted blithely to pursue
Shall make appeals to me no more,
My cheerful moments shall be few.

I'll keep away from places where
The lilacs and the roses bloom,
For such things rouse me from despair
And tend to drive away my gloom,
And if a robin or a lark
Begins to sing where I can hear
I'll hunt some corner that is dark
Where I may keep my conscience clear.

If brooks insist on babbling while
I walk beside them, I'll turn back;
To make it hard for me to smile
I'll keep my liver out of whack;
Praise shall not bring me any joy
Nor shall good fortune make me proud,
Lest I endanger or destroy
The soul with which I am endowed.

I'm out to win eternal bliss;
A sad old sharp has told me how;
Joy in the life that follows this
Demands dejection here and now.
From every pleasure I will turn,
No cheer shall linger where I pass;
I'll save my soul if I can learn
To be a sad and solemn ass.

S. E. KISER.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

Lecture notices must reach 61 Farrington 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. Horace J. Bridges (Chicago)—“President Hoover and his Problems.”

OUTDOOR.

FULHAM AND CHELSEA BRANCH N.S.S. (corner of Shorrolds Road, Walham Green Church) : Saturday, 8.0, various speakers. Sunday, 8.0, Walham Green Church, Mr. F. P. Corrigan—A Lecture.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N.S.S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand) : 3.15, Mr. E. C. Saphin.—A Lecture.

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

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

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

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Regent's Park, near the Fountain) : 6.0, Mrs. R. H. Rosetti.

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

COUNTRY.

OUTDOOR.

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N.S.S.—Monday, June 24, at 7.30, Beaumont Street, Mr. J. V. Short—A Lecture.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE BRANCH N.S.S. (Town Moor, near North Road Entrance) : 7.0, “Race Sunday.” Speakers—Messrs. Atkinson, Brighton and Keast.

GLASGOW BRANCH N.S.S.—Ramble to Finnich, Glen. Meet at the “Black Bull” Inn, Milngavie at 2 o'clock prompt.

MR. JACK CLAYTON will lecture at the following places this week : Sunday, June 23, Todmorden Market, 7.30; Monday, June 24, Great Harwood, 8.0; Friday, June 28, Crawshaw-booth, 7.45.

CHESTER-LE-STREET BRANCH N.S.S. (Stanley, Anthony Street) : Saturday, June 22, at 7.0; Wednesday, June 26, Houghton (White Lion), 7.15, Speakers—L. Brown, W. Raine, J. T. Brighton.

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

Pioneer Press Publications—

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Miscellaneous Advertisements.

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OFFERS WANTED!—Several bound volumes of *Free-thinker*. Also old issue of *Freethinker*, 3 vols., from 1718-1719. Also Old Skeleton Clock under glass case, 70 years in one family.—H.T., 8 Rutland Road, Ilford, Essex.

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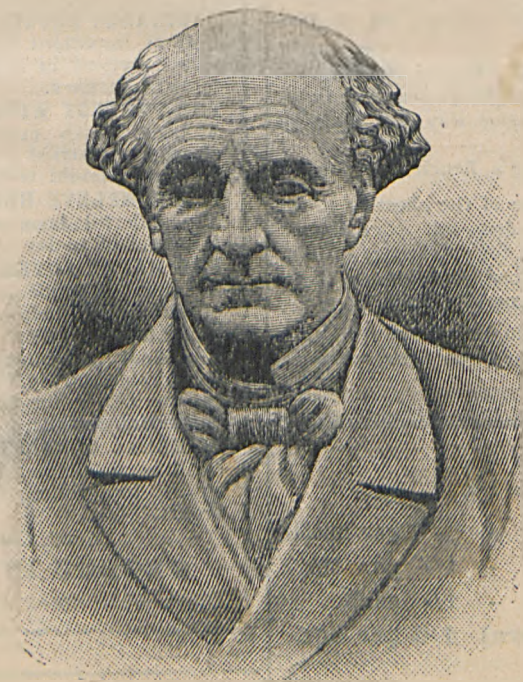
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