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Views and Opinions.

Flat Catching.

THE Roman Catholic Church claims that the State shall subsidize Roman Catholic schools, leaving the appointment of teachers in its hands, and with full leave to take care that every hour of school life is saturated with Roman Catholic theology, Roman Catholic history, and Roman Catholic science. Other Christian Churches claim something of the same kind, but they make the demand on behalf of the rights of parents—which means authorizing parents to take care that their children shall grow up no wiser and no better than they are themselves. But the Roman Catholic Church makes the claim on behalf of the Church. It cares no more for the rights of parents than it does for the rights of citizens. It is the Church it is concerned about; it is in the name of the Church that it has lied and robbed and tortured and imprisoned and slandered with all the full-blooded activity of Christian conviction. Still further, the Roman Church claims not merely that all sections of the community shall support its religious and incubatory establishments, it also claims that the only education that is worth having is that given under Roman Catholic auspices. It will submit to other educational plans while it must, but it does so under protest. It will tolerate only while it cannot suppress. To the priest every child is a potential client, and history shows that the Christian Church will stop at nothing to achieve its ends.

* * *

Catholic Truth.

The educational claims of the Roman Church being what they are, it is worth while noting the type of mind to which that Church appeals for support, and the kind of intelligence it aims at developing. Someone, the other day, was good enough to send me one of the tracts published by the Catholic

Truth Society. The title is in itself significant. Apart from religion, one is satisfied to talk plain truth, satisfied that truth can have and should have no sectarian label. But we have Christian truth, then Protestant truth, and finally Catholic truth. I should be the last to deny that the distinction is necessary; for Christian truth is certainly not truth as scientific men understand it; and peculiar as Christian truth is, Roman Catholic truth is still stranger. It is that truth which gave us numerous forgeries, and impostures, and which still places these forgeries and impostures before people as undiluted fact.

The tract sent me deals with the lives of two Catholic martyrs, Thomas More and John Fisher, and with the benefits of addressing prayers to them. The writer of the pamphlet says "the Church is probably cautious in accepting miracles. She demands the most rigorous investigation before she will give her approval." Presumably, caution in accepting miracles must be read in a relative sense, for one notes that the Church is much less ready to accept a miracle in England than it would be in a village in the South of France; its miracles have always been most plentiful in the most ignorant ages, and amongst the most ignorant people. That, of course, may not be the fault of the Church; it must take its miracles as one takes the weather—as it comes, and it may be that the Lord feels more among his own when he is dealing with the less enlightened among his children.

* * *

Serviceable Saints.

The record of favours granted by these two sainted individuals, or of miracles performed, cover many kinds of help from finding clients for lawyers to securing rooms for those needing them. No. 1 on the list of letters comes from a lawyer who attended the mid-day benediction of St. Mary's, Moorfields. He prayed for his "material needs, and particularly, at that juncture, for new clients." On returning to his office a friend rang him up to say he was sending a client. That was quick enough in all conscience. Another legal case comes from a man who needed a situation. Before the feast of the Blessed Thomas More he began a "Novena," asking the aforesaid Thomas More to find him a situation. Very soon he received a letter from a Catholic lawyer, who engaged him as Secretary, and "I began my new duties on the day the novena ended." But "the crowning work the martyrs did for us in getting us a flat." Perhaps the picture of the two "blessed martyrs" hunting Southwark to find a flat for this good man is quite affecting.

I pass over some very ordinary cases of people praying for recovery from illness, and getting better, of cheques received in answer to prayer, also the case of the Mother of an East Anglican Convent, who writes to say she is beginning a novena for an ex-

pected cheque, as that seems just a trifle artful. Some ordinary mortal may get there before the Blessed Martyrs. But here is a touching letter from Blackheath, April, 1928:—

I write to express my thanksgiving for a rise of £150 per annum, received, as I conceive it, through the intercession of the Martyrs.

This from Hertfordshire, June, 1928:—

I have been concerned with the attempt to dispose of a house in this neighbourhood for two years . . . I bethought me of the Blessed Thomas, to whom I used to have a great devotion. I explained the circumstances to him, detailed certain claims I had to his consideration, and asked him to work a miracle on my behalf. Two days later the house was sold. I am willing to make any affirmation of the above.

From Dulwich comes a letter relating how by the intercession of Blessed T. More, and Blessed J. Fisher, there was won a legal victory, which "enabled me to obtain £2,000." From Sussex comes a story of a man who tried to get a misleading report corrected in a newspaper, but without result. So, "I put the affair into the hands of our two Martyrs, and the result is that the newspaper has published a full and completely satisfactory correction of the matter. On the other hand a complaint comes from Surrey to the effect that the only thing the Martyrs have failed one applicant in has been a "small legal matter." From this the complainant concludes that "Sir Thomas has no further interest in the law."

* * *

Fraud and Folly.

There are plenty more instances of the same kind, and in Roman Catholic papers it is possible to see lists of testimonials of the same quality. It will be observed there is no fooling about these devotees. If they praise the saints they expect them to do something in return, as in the case of the gentleman who reminded the dead saint of the claims he had on him for services rendered. These Blessed saints may help to sell a house, to cure a cold, to convert a heretic, to "wangle" a legal victory, to find lodgings; one would not be surprised if they might be able to "spot the winner" of next year's Derby if they are approached in time and in the proper way. When we hear of the Saints in their blessed rest, we ought to bethink that Roman Catholic saints must have an exceedingly busy time.

It is difficult to be serious with such unadulterated rubbish, or to think without some misgivings of the grade of intelligence that can believe such things as are published in the pamphlet cited. And it is always a moot question how far do those responsible for the publication of such pamphlets actually believe in the stories related? Belief of this kind brings grist to the clerical mill, and I find it difficult to believe that even the average priest can be so supremely silly as to believe in Saints who go round finding lodgings, influencing the decisions of judges and juries, or seeing that a man's salary is increased. A man who sets up in the business of supplying credulous fools with lucky charms, or magic powders, or supernatural messages would be denounced on all hands as a fraud, and if carried out on too great a scale there would be an outcry from the press for police action. But here is an enormous trade being done in this kind of supernatural or magical fortune telling and fortune making, and those who run it have the colossal impudence to demand special concessions from the State to enable them to turn out a constant supply of atrophied intellects which permit belief in the stupid falsehoods of the Catholic Truth Society! If the common fortune teller deserves the legal description of "rogue and vagabond," what do men who live, and a Church

which lives, by circulating stories of the kind cited deserve to be called?

* * *

A Threat to Civilization.

Ancient civilization went down before the growth of the crass superstition which now exists as the Christian Church. Of that Church the Roman Catholic section is the oldest, the strongest, and the truest representative. It is, moreover, the only Christian Church that appears to be advancing in this country in numbers, in influence and in wealth. It controls the least intelligent and the most docile vote in the country, and at the last election politicians of every party were angling for this vote, and ready to pay for it by giving the Roman Church more power to distort the minds of those children unfortunate enough to be committed to its care. What chance has civilization if its direction is likely to be largely in the hands of men and women at the side of whom a savage is an intellectually independent person? Can we be quite certain that our civilization may not go down before this vast mass of superstition just as the civilization of Greece and Rome was buried for centuries under the degrading superstitions of the Christian Church? We laugh at the absurdities of the Catholic Truth Society, as we laugh at the vagaries of Billy Sunday, and the Bishop of London and similar survivals of the Stone Age. But these men have votes; power is in their hands, and because of this, political leaders shrink from giving offence to them, and are ready to buy their support. What is to be the consequences of the growth of this kind of thing in our midst. We may smile at it—so, we know, did the philosophers of Old Rome smile at the superstition of the Christians of their day.

What protection have we against this monstrous superstition? Persecution is of no avail. The futility of that plan has been shown over and over again. There is only one force against which the Christian Church has so far shown itself to be powerless, and that is the gradual development of civilization, the slow growth of enlightenment. There is only one enemy the Church has to dread—the growth of Freethought. Let us go on making Freethinkers.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

The Napoleon of Freethought.

The great Achilles whom we knew."—Tennyson.

"The decay of dogmatic religion is, for good or evil, one of the most important fact of the modern world."
Bertrand Russell.

"The man who feels that he has truth on his side must step firmly. Truth is not to be dallied with."
Goethe.

THE publication of a new and cheap edition of Charles Bradlaugh's work: *Humanity's Gain from Unbelief* recalls the personality of one of the most striking figures in the history of English Freethought. I am one of the fast dwindling band of those who knew him in the flesh, and many a time I have travelled from South London to the Hall of Science, Old Street, and other halls, to hear those orations which placed Bradlaugh in the forefront of the battle for liberty.

It was Bradlaugh's oratory which drew public attention to him, and this was scarcely to be wondered at, for, in a generation of fine speakers, his extraordinary oratorical gifts made him conspicuous. Remember it was the day of John Bright, Gladstone, Spurgeon, Parker, Newman Hall, and of Gambetta and Castelar. In an age of talent Bradlaugh carved an imperishable name for himself. His life was a rare romance. The story of his meteoric rise is like a leaf

torn from the pages of Plutarch; the story of his untimely death is as moving and as poignant as a tragedy of Sophocles. He will live with Cobbett and Parnell as one whom a vivid and forceful personality must always make interesting.

Six feet high, splendidly proportioned, and with a leonine head, his was a commanding figure on any platform. He was an ideal leader, with his splendid oratorical and organizing gifts, he led the Freethought Party to victory. In his earlier days the Freethinkers were feebly led and fitfully inspired. Without his leadership their stay in the desert might have been prolonged many years. It was he, most ably seconded by men and women of real talent, doubtless, but, again, first and foremost, he who made the Freethought Party as we know it to-day.

"Thorough" was his motto, and throughout life he acted up to it. He was the exact opposite of the democratic leaders of the present day who tell a different tale to each audience. Bradlaugh would have scorned such baseness. In every issue of his paper, *The National Reformer*, he proclaimed himself Republican, Atheist, and Malthusian, and he stood by his principles against the world, like the rock of Gibraltar. He was no dreamer, leaving others to translate his ideas into deeds. It took him thirteen years continuous fighting before he was allowed to sit in Parliament as the representative of Northampton. His sole crime was that he was an Atheist. Indeed, in those stormy days Freethinkers had to fight every inch of the way. Thanks to Bradlaugh's courage and devotion he transformed the scattered Freethought regiments into a complete army. To-day heterodoxy is no longer a serious bar to the citizen, and ecclesiastical authority has been shorn of its worst dangers.

It is strange that people are only now beginning to see that Bradlaugh's attitude to religion was actually forced upon him. He had no wish to fight tens of thousands of priests, and hundreds of thousands of their supporters. He did not want to waste his time discussing such puerilities as Noah's Ark, Jonah and the Whale, and the Virgin Birth. But he saw quite clearly that priestcraft was the bulwark of tyranny, and that priestcraft and Kingcraft were twin evils. It was precisely because the Christian Religion was the shield of injustice that he challenged it. If he seemed to those outside of his influence a mere image-breaker he has in this only shared the fate of the world's greatest reformers. "Raised to Giordano Bruno by the generation he foresaw," reads the inscription on the monument where Bruno was burned to death. And Bradlaugh was a pioneer as much as Bruno, and as worthy of our regard.

What a price Bradlaugh paid for his leadership! The last time I heard him lecture at the old Hall of Science, I realized that he was a broken man. For a whole generation he had led the forces of Freethought like a plumed knight in shining armour. But the Philistines were too much for even his iron constitution, the odds were too great. Brave to the last, he kept a bold front to the enemy, but he was bleeding to death beneath his armour. Some of his cheering audience nearly broke down thinking of the fierce old fighting days, when there was no thought of anything but the battle itself. Had his enemies known Bradlaugh as he really was, they could never have hated him as they did. Jealousies and unkindness and bitterness of spirit are in most human labours, but religion, with its insincerities and intellectual meanesses, seems to hold a poison of its own, which narrows the vision and blunts the edge of principle.

The work done by Bradlaugh and his colleagues is a most important chapter in the history of the popularizing of Freethought principles. During the many

years which have elapsed since Bradlaugh's death, great and far-reaching changes have taken place. The most important are the safeguarding of bequests to Freethought, the stabilization of its finances, and the inclusion of ladies in the Movement. In the far-off days of Southwell and Holyoake, the audiences at Freethought meetings were almost entirely composed of men, whereas to-day the position is very different. Under Mr. Chapman Cohen's administration the Freethought Party is widening in influence. Owing to his enterprise, too, it is still in the vanguard of progress, sheltering behind it all the weaker heterodox people, who otherwise had been crushed by the weight of orthodoxy.

Secularists have a real right to be proud of their history. As the little *Revenge* earned an undying name by hurling herself against the great battleships of the Spaniards, so the Freethinkers have displayed extraordinary courage in attacking the heart of the vastly more formidable Armada of Superstition. The greater the victory, and in the ripe years to come recognition must be given to the superb courage, which, disregarding any reward, was satisfied with the knowledge that their action would benefit their fellow men. Let us salute the memory of some of the bravest men and women who ever drew breath.

MIMNERMUS.

Whither Mankind.

A VOLUME of essays entitled *Whither Mankind* (Longmans Green, 1928) consists of sixteen essays which discuss modern civilization from various points of view, under the editorship of Mr. C. A. Beard, who contributes an Introduction and an Epilogue. The work is really of American origin and printed in America; twelve of the contributors being American. Four English, namely, Bertrand Russell, who deals with "Science." Sidney and Beatrice Webb, who deal with "Labour," and Havelock Ellis, who deals with "The Family." One German, Emil Ludwig, writes on "War and Peace," and one Chinese, Hu Shih, on "The Civilizations of the East and the West."

An editorial "Preface," explains: "Authorities of outstanding competence, possessing also the ability to present their ideas with clearness and vigour, were chosen to deal with the several phases of modern civilization. No limitations, save those of space, were laid upon them. Each writer was given a free hand. None of them was asked to assume any responsibility for the opinions of the others. The editor has not altered their copy, smoothed out contradictions, or taken on the duty of defending everything that appears in these pages. If the principle of liberty had not commanded this, the distinction of the co-operating authors would have made it imperative." The sub-title of the work, by the way, states that it is a: "Panorama of modern civilization."

How does religion come out of this comprehensive survey of modern civilization? Very poorly indeed. Religion, which saturated the literature of the Victorian era, finds a very small place here, and that in the background. Most of the essays ignore it altogether, as if it had no existence; while those who do deign to notice it, do so with many a hefty kick. One essay, indeed, by James Harvey Robinson, is devoted to religion. In this the author says that while it is claimed that religion is essential to human welfare, he asks: "But what is religion?" And observes that: "The word religion is perhaps the vaguest of all the important nouns in our language. Innumerable pathetic efforts have been made to define the most indefinite of terms." From Kant, who said that

it consisted in recognising all our duties as Divine commands; to Ruskin who declared: "Our national religion is the performance of Church ceremonies, and preaching soporific truths (or untruths) to keep the mob quietly at work while we amuse ourselves." Some, as he further points out, would retain the title of religion for their beliefs, even after having discarded the idea of God! "So much," he says "for the attempts to define religion. Would it not be better in the interest of clarity to regard religion, not as a mystic and essential entity, but as a label which we attach to one division of our beliefs, emotions, and deeds? We have many moods, fears, hopes, aspirations, scruples, loves and abhorrences. Some of these we are wont to call religious, but not so very many." Although, he further observes, the partisans of religion can: "Come to no agreement on what religion is, or even what things are religious. They agree only in thinking that those who differ from them have a false religion."

As for Christianity, it no longer stands apart as a peculiar and God-inspired revelation. The mastering of the ancient Indian and Chinese languages; of the Egyptian hieroglyphics and Mesopotamian cuneiform, has made an incredible addition to our knowledge of early religion, and: "Christianity took its place for the first time in a large group of still more ancient forms of belief, each with its venerable wisdom and teachings in regard to man's duties and fate." Even the moral teachings of Christianity are found not to be original, but had their origin in older sources: "It is assumed," says Mr. Robinson, "by most Christians, ignorant of history, that the teachings of Jesus were highly novel, and that the prevailing of Christianity was so startling an event as alone to prove its divine character. Neither of these beliefs can be held by one familiar with scholarly books on these matters." A Brooklyn clergyman, the Rev. Richard Storrs, says our essayist, wrote a large book entitled: *The Divine Origin of Christianity Indicated*. In which he claimed that: "the religion of Jesus is at this hour the commanding factor in whatever is best in the character and the progress of persons and states. It has not merely rectified particular abuses, removed special evils, exerted a benign and salutary influence on local institutions. It has formed and instructed a general Christian consciousness in the world." To which Mr. Robinson objects:—

To claim, however, that the disappearance of witchcraft and slavery, and the introduction of religious toleration were the effects of Christian teachings seems not to stand inspection. The leaders of the various churches have most rarely raised their voices against what seem to us now ancient and happily extinct atrocities. They were not the ones who did away with them. On the contrary, they very generally supported religious intolerance, accepted slavery, blessed war, and cursed those who suspected the gloomy deceptions of witchcraft. So much for the arguments of the Reverend Dr. Storrs. (*Whither Mankind*. pp. 284-285.)

And as for moral practice, he further observes: "When we come to daily observations we cannot distinguish between the believer and the unbeliever by his conduct, by his honesty, generosity, and other homely virtues. Bradstreet does not reckon with religion in establishing one's credit. The custom house official would not pass unexamined the luggage of one professing the Athanasian creed or submitting a certificate of good standing in the Brick Church." And, to conclude, scientific knowledge has discredited the Christian cosmology founded on the Bible: "As Samuel Butler says, it was not hard in his boyhood for the ordinary English clergyman to

think of God's moulding Adam in the ictory garden, and retiring to the greenhouse to form Eve. Those who cling to a heavily anthropocentric universe have now to alter their lines of argument." (p. 286.) Mr. Robinson surveys religion with the cold, scientific detachment, of a naturalist discussing the qualities and characteristics of an animal or plant, in contrast with the Chinese contributor Hu Shih, whose essay on "The Civilizations of the East and the West" stands first in the book, and who makes a vigorous attack upon religion. He declares, of those hypnotic religions which taught that poverty and misery were something to be proud of, that life was not worth living, and that the only desirable thing was the blissful existence in the world beyond: "It was those religions of defeatism that sank the whole civilized world underneath the universal deluge of Medievalism. It took over a thousand years for a portion of mankind to emerge from the civilization which glorifies poverty and sanctifies disease, and slowly build up a new civilization which glorifies life and combats poverty as a crime." With the aid of science, he continues:—

Life has become easier and happier, and man's confidence in his own powers has greatly increased. Man has become the master of himself and of his own destiny. Thus a revolutionary poet sings:—

I fight alone, and win or sink,
I need no one to make me free;
I want no Jesus Christ to think
That he could ever die for me.

Thus the new civilization of the new age has given to men a new religion, the religion of self-reliance as contrasted with the religion of defeatism of the Middle Ages. (p. 31.)

W. MANN.

Masterpieces of Freethought.

(Concluded from page 395.)

VII.—GENESIS.

By CHARLES BRADLAUGH.

II.

BRADLAUGH commenced his work with a masterly introduction, giving a wonderful précis of the Mosaic problem. It extends to twenty-seven pages, is full of references to Christian authorities, some of whom claimed divine authorship for every word in the Pentateuch, while others denied any book could be absolutely "divine." To read their conflicting views makes almost as humorous reading as *Pickwick*. Here were a number of quite reasonable men, probably excellent citizens in every way, devoting years of thought and study—to say nothing of anguish of mind—trying by every means in their power to square Genesis with common sense. For that is all there is in the problem. There is not a scrap of evidence worth considering which could possibly make the Bible from the point of view of the history of man's origins, any different from the *Arabian Nights*. The Holy Book abounds in supernatural stories, which are so obviously untrue, that no average person would believe them for a moment, were he not frightened to do so by religion. And Bradlaugh collected together a large number of opinions, most of which are laughable, to prove that even among ardent believers, dreadful doubts had filtered in, dragging rank heresy and infamous infidelity in their train, and making the unlucky commentators fearful of their fate when they left this vale of tears for the happy Paradise they so ardently prayed for.

I have always thought this Introduction could bear reprinting as a separate pamphlet, for it is complete

in itself, and is quite the handiest little work recording the conflicting voices in the Church about Genesis I have come across.

Bradlaugh then plunges right into his subject, and after quoting verse 1 of Genesis, commences his first chapter with: "There is scarcely a word of this verse that has not been the subject of hot dispute."

There is nothing I should like to quote more than the succeeding pages, but my problem would be where to stop. Every page is full of the illuminating difficulties which Christian scholars have to face, and the awful mess they made trying to solve them, and it is obvious how little they were disposed to take the common sense view of the utter unhistoricity of the accounts, even when they were forced to disbelieve them.

Get any "reasonable" Christian on to Bible Chronology, and in a trice he will prove as slippery as a Catholic Evidence speaker. Of course Usher was wrong, he made the mistake of saying a day *was* a day. Now any real devout believer knows that a day in the Bible means a thousand years—at least it does in Genesis, even though there was a morning and evening attached thereto. Of course, when it doesn't mean a thousand years, then it means something else but a *real day*—well—well—that depends. Methusaleh's 969 years obviously meant *months*. As for 4004 B.C., who said that? Did Jesus? No, well, there you are, we genuine Christians are never wrong, and the Bible, containing as it does God's Holy Word, could not be wrong. Have we not all met this delicious type of Christian? What Bradlaugh did, by exact references to Genesis, was to prove how Bible Chronology was made up, and what a fearful muddle believers got themselves in by blindly following the dates given in the margin of their Bibles. In 1881 there were thousands of clergymen who had long ago given up these dates, but as Bradlaugh pointed out "Even to-day (1881) while many, very many clergymen of the Church of England know that the statement (that man had only existed for about 6,000 years) is not true, they are reticent; they keep the knowledge to themselves, and not only give no help to clear away the falsehood, but permit little children still to be taught the old orthodox chronology." It is still taught to-day as true in private and State schools all over the country, and we know how the Catholics are clamouring for the State to pay them so that they can continue to teach children the same old lies which not merely science, but quite believing Christians have exploded years ago. Here in the *Church Times* for May 24, 1929, is a review of a book entitled *Prehistoric Man in Genesis*, by the Rev. F. de P. Castells, A.K.C. The reviewer actually heads his criticism "The Adam Story," and thus proves at the outset his superb lack of faith in the Grand Old Book, and he then spends a column in demolishing Mr. Castells attempts at a new proof that there is something in the Genesis account which most of us who are not so discerning as the author, can't see.

Now here is the *Church Times* admitting a review which might read as if coming from the hand of Bradlaugh himself, and it is worth while quoting a passage: "The book will be rejected presumably by Fundamentalists, because it treats the story (of Adam) as legend, in a manner impossible to reconcile with a verbally inspired Divine oracle; to the anthropologist, it is valueless, since it sets forth a purely imaginary reconstruction of history; to the theologian it suggests an impossible exegesis; while for those who use their Bibles for devotional purposes, the poetic and religious value of one of the most charming idylls in literature is in great measure destroyed. As quasi-history the cosmogony is unthinkable . . ."

So the "Adam Story" is unthinkable for a pious *Church Times* reviewer, but it is not unthinkable for thousands of teachers and children all over the world. And until it is admitted in all schools, and by all sects of Christianity, that the "Adam Story" is not true, such books as Bradlaugh's *Genesis* are still necessary.

Bradlaugh also discusses, with copious extracts from pious defenders on each side, the authenticity of the Septuagint and the Samaritan versions. These are worth reading even now, as one can learn how "authorities" differed on almost every point. The truth is, they were guessing or framing excuses, and it is really ludicrous to see how a man with "Rev." before his name imagined he was an authority on the Bible. Even the Hebrew word translated "create" has caused immense discussions, and what it really does mean, no one knows to this day. If it means *create*—that is making something out of nothing—it is absolutely unthinkable. Another word Bradlaugh analyses exhaustively is "Elohism." This cognomen of God Almighty has given defenders no end of trouble, and particularly monotheists, for the word is *plural*. Still God is just as likely to be plural as anything else.

So, quietly, methodically, Bradlaugh went through every verse of that first chapter of Genesis, dealing exhaustively with each dubious word, and bringing forward the views of many great experts.

And as a contrast, he devotes some pages to what Science, away from religion, had to say on man's origin. It need hardly be said science and Genesis do not agree.

In the second chapter of the Bible we get the other name for God, Ieue, or Jehovah in English. This is a very sacred word, and was never to be pronounced by pious Jews. But no one (except holy Kabbalists) knows why. Bradlaugh refers to Hutchinson's *Moses's Sine Principio*, and says he has "four curious chapters devoted to Ie, Ieue, Al, and Alhm; but they are pervaded by so much mysticism that the erudition is obscured, though he is most useful as putting one on the track of other authors." Bradlaugh, in my opinion, never understood the "mystic" side of Genesis; but if there had been no mysticism, I fail to see how such a work as the *Tobar* could have been written, or the other speculations of the Kabbalists. But that is another side to the Biblical question. Thus for over 100 pages, we get the opinions of the greatest of Biblical commentators on the meanings attached to those early Hebrew words in Genesis, and we have not finished with the second chapter. This gives some sort of an idea as to what painstaking book Bradlaugh has given us, and the rest is written on the same plan—always with his own observations on the critics and the criticism. The modern man, with his distractions and amusements, generally gets his knowledge in tabloid form. Where previously he read a book and a fat one at that, he now thinks he knows just as much after reading a half column newspaper article. And in any case he simply cannot be made to read the enormous times of Biblical criticisms which have been written in the past, and which must have had a fair share of interested readers. What Bradlaugh has done is to give copious extracts from Cahen, Calmet, Kalisch, Browne, Patrick, Bellamy, Colenso, Davidson, Goldziher, Lightfoot and many more commentators, and shown how they tear each other to pieces as well as their incapacity to understand "plain" scripture. It is all very amusing.

Finally we get his views on the Fall of Man, and how it applies to Christianity:—

Chapter iii. (of the Bible) contains the very basis of Christianity. It is impossible to reject Christ. It

must either be taken as literal truth or else the entire scheme of redemption must be abandoned. If this narrative of the fall is legend, myth, allegory, then the whole foundation for the atonement falls away.

No Christian can answer that. Talking about the beautiful teachings of Jesus is no answer, especially if one takes up these teachings, and proves, as can be done quite easily, that where they are beautiful they are not of Jesus, and where they are of Jesus, they are not beautiful. Bradlaugh's *Genesis* is therefore vindicated. It did necessary work and it stands out as a monument of patient industry, careful examination and clear and logical comments. It has not the fire of Thomas Paine, or the magical writing and sardonic wit of George William Foote. But it remains one of the most valuable and one of the most complete commentaries from the Freethought side of the first eleven chapters of *Genesis* ever penned.

H. CUTNER.

The Wisdom of Maxim Gorki.

"Reminiscences of My Youth."

THIS retrospect of the author must have been written when he was about the age of forty-five. Although it appears to be a labour of love, he is again very severe on himself, but one feels that he loses nothing by the confession of what are human weaknesses—very frequently such recollections from other hands are pitched in a minor key—they are written with self-pity almost as a virtue. Witness, for example, the blubberings of St. Augustine, the fetid atmosphere of Alfred de Musset, who wallows in the extensive boundaries of "love," the melancholy of Matthew Arnold—such counsel takes us nowhere, when up against the bitter facts of life. They are the grand No-sayers to life, and the old man with the scythe will tell us all we wish to know of his special subject. At this period Gorki has before him copious facts that do not fit in with his youthful speculations. Hardly any human being can truthfully say that the world when becoming realized in the developing mind is in any great degree in accordance with his youthful impressions. This may explain the strong bond of sympathy between the very young and the very old. Between youth and age the arc of life has been completed; one may even touch gently the word "sacred" at this point, although it has suffered the usual mutilation at the hands of the great misleaders.

The translator of the above book records the treatment of Gorki received from his relative: "He was consigned to his maternal grandfather, Kashirin, a tyrannical old man, who, by the aid of frequent chastisement, taught him to read the Psalms and the Breviary." So much then, for the inborn religious instinct.

Our author had a peculiar gift for finding out, amongst his mixed associates, those from whom he could learn. Smouri, the cook, and Yakov, the stoker, have faded away into the pleasant mists of memory, his grandmother is dead, and another philosopher and friend comes on the scene, Nikita Rubtsov, an old weaver. Aristotle and Plato, Master and Slave morality, the Will to Power, the survival of the fittest, even the play of *Coriolanus* are all contained in Rubtsov's counsel to the young listener: "The man who walks in front is sure to have his forehead kicked, and a forehead is not a backside, it takes much longer to heal." Harsh and crude, but if our own wise men said that, they would be soon gravelled for matter. Rubtsov had, like his pupil, been reading from the book of life itself, and no one can say that they have read the last page. From this book there is not much to unlearn; it tells no lies, seeks no favours, flatters none: but it brings a compensation. It enables one to live with ones-self—which is different from living to ones-self.

A follower of Tolstoy evokes at one time some thoughts from Gorki when there was a storm raging in

his mental world—the Tolstoyan with his fierce aggressiveness would almost, out of compassion for mankind, kill men and burn them at the stake . . . and Gorki in a few words epitomizes this phenomenon as follows: "From direct observation I saw that the whole structure of society was almost completely devoid of human sympathy. Life was unfolding itself before me as an endless chain of hostility and cruelty, as an unceasing and sordid struggle for the possession of worthless objects. To me, personally, books were the only necessity, everything else possessed no importance in my eyes."

Another memorable character who appears in the life of the writer is one, Michael Antonov Romas. Gorki, at his bidding, left the baker's shop and went with him to Krasnovidov, a village some forty-five miles lower down the Volga from Kazan. This man kept a store, but his real object in life was to educate the peasantry, a Quixotic task, for at one time they responded by putting gunpowder in a log of wood which was innocently thrown on the fire. This almost blew down the store, and in order to render thanks effectively, the peasants at last succeeded in burning down the house of their teacher. This heroic man, who treated the ignorant as children, once said to Gorki: "Man is a cruder and poorer teacher than books are, but, for all that, knowledge acquired through him makes a deeper impression on the mind." Romas, had, before the fire, a good stock of good books. Buckle, Lyell, Lecky, Lubbock, Taylor, Mill, Spencer and Darwin, formed part of his library. Hobbes' *Leviathan*, and also Machiavelli's *Prince* were included—the latter being classed as a cheerful book. In this chapter a queer fellow comes along, Izot by name, who loves fishing in the dark on the Volga. As a specimen of mixed metaphor, he speaks of his diversion in the following ecstatic language: "At night on the Volga it is the kingdom of heaven." If, then, this was his heart's desire, he would not give the celestial establishment much trouble. He was murdered in his boat by the same peasantry that made a bonfire of the home of Romas. And, curious as it may seem, the reading of Gorki in this volume gives the impression that he is simply a passenger, there is the unrest of the nomad, moving is in the air continually; he leaves the scene and journeys to Dobrink, where he becomes a night-watchman at the station.

Again, at this place, he finds characters that are drawn with the strong outline of a Blake. It will be remembered that this volume was written when the author was about forty-five; time had slipped away, but his all-powerful memory recalls these figures that have come before his eyes to disappear for ever. A fellow craftsman, Kuprin, expresses this experience in a few words in one of his short stories: "God or Nature—I really don't know which—after giving man an almost God-like intelligence has—at the same time, invented for him two torturing traps: ignorance of the future and the impossibility of forgetting the past, with the equal impossibility of returning to it." This in itself justifies the last line of the quatrain of Omar Khayyám:—

"Oh, Thou, who Man of baser Earth didst make,
And ev'n with Paradise devise the Snake:
For all the Sin wherewith the Face of Man
Is blacken'd—Man's forgiveness give—and take!"

Some Greek scholar stated that all knowledge was recollection. This, together, with the rosy views of the past, provide the material for Mystics, "word-jugglers," and others, who, because they think a thing is so, it must follow, therefore, that it is so. In reviewing his youthful experiences Gorki has added to it the wine of wisdom. The delicate reader may sometimes shrink from his descriptions of life as he found it; this does not alter the fact that the world, meaning men in it, is not the last word in perfection, and this very fact provides abundant material for men like our author who wrote: "I have not come into the world to comply with it."

WILLIAM REPTON.

If there is a wish for immortality, and no evidence, why not just say that? If there is not ground for a candid thinker to make up his mind, yea or nay—why not suspend the judgment?

Montaigne; or, the Sceptic Emerson.

Acid Drops.

We wonder how long it will be before the authorities decide to deal sternly with such disgraceful exhibitions as took place the other day at the Caxton Hall. For a public meeting to be broken up, and men and women assaulted by a number of ill-bred and rowdy medical students is a public scandal; and it is grotesque when the only punishment to be meted out is a small fine. If such proceedings occurred in the East End of London it would be called hooliganism, and there would be a few broken heads as a consequence, while there would be letters of protest against the ruffianism of the "masses." If magistrates were to give each of the offenders charged a month's imprisonment there would soon be a falling off in these displays. Failing that, we wonder that those responsible for holding the meetings do not see that about a dozen "hefty" men are engaged to do what the authorities will not do. Men who behave as the Caxton Hall rowdies did are invariably bullies, and a little physical chastisement would soon calm their ardour. The rights of public meetings are too important to be broken with impunity.

If there were no British Empire, says the Earl of Meath, there would be no peace and no chance of keeping peace. But what about the other view, that a large empire and huge armaments to defend it excite envy and fear among other nations? Envy and fear lead to war.

At the request of the Leyton Juvenile Organizations' Committee, who have undertaken to find volunteer workers, and to organize games, etc., several playgrounds are to be opened on two evenings each week. But why not open the playgrounds all day on Sundays? No doubt volunteers for supervision would be forthcoming. Playgrounds open on Sundays would be twice as valuable to the children as on a week-day. The police know it, and so do educationists and parents. Children are reduced to boredom because parsons think their trade will benefit by it. Boredom may be an excellent training for Heaven, but no intelligent person ever thought it a good thing for children on earth.

The Rev. Tom Ellison, of Sydney, says that the population of Australia is about six and a quarter millions. One in nine of the people are Methodists. The Presbyterians number about the same, and the two sects together equal the Roman Catholics. Assuming these estimates to be correct, the majority of Australians are outside the Churches. Australia is all the better for it.

The Prime Minister says he wants to inaugurate an entirely new era of European co-operation. If that is so, it would be as well not to expect much assistance to this end from the Churches. A survey of the past reveals that the Christian sects have done as much as anything to excite ill-feeling and strife between nations. Again, for hundreds of years there has been, on millions of Christian tongues, much amiable slop about brotherhood in Christ. But it prevented no wars. The new era will have a chance of being inaugurated only if founded on reason and experience.

Vesuvius has destroyed several villages on the mountain side. In default of other explanation, we suggest that God permitted the destruction for the purpose of exciting Christian pity, and of furnishing an opportunity for pious people to display true-blue Christian charity. Maybe, however, it might be a gentle sign from Heaven that Christ is staging a Second Advent.

Police officers of Brighton have been giving "Safety First" instruction to school-children. Apparently, the view of educationists in the city is that a little common-sense instruction is more valuable to children than the prayers of anxious parents.

The Christian Bible has much to answer for. Mrs. Leonora Eyles says, in a woman's weekly, that she can speak very feelingly about the lot of the child who is taught to be ashamed of her body. Mrs. Eyles says she was always told, in a very Puritan home, that to try to make oneself look nice, or to want pretty clothes, was disgraceful. She was not permitted to learn to dance, because it was considered foolish and ridiculous in her home to do any thing with one's body at all. This repression, says Mrs. Eyles caused her many years of misery. Now she thinks that one of the most important things to teach children is respect for and pride in their bodies, and the natural use of their bodies. They should be taught that the human body is a beautiful thing. These discoveries of Mrs. Eyles are not Christian, but pagan revivals. The stupid notions her parents taught were derived from Holy Writ, and were accepted by Christians during the larger part of the Christian era. The world of to-day, especially the younger portion of it, may well be thankful that the religion of repression and insanitation has lost its hold. The Holy Bible was an evil gift from which the world is only just recovering.

The Board of Education has a "black list" of denominational schools considered to be unfit for educational purposes. Regarding this list, "The Dominion" in the *Teachers' World*, says that political opponents of the new President of the Board may desire to hamper him, but such consideration would be wiped out if all parties were to bear in mind only the welfare of the children. The writer adds:—

With all possible respect for the views of those who insist on the importance of definite religious teaching in schools, I have never been able to see the merit of damaging a child's health. I should say that a knowledge of the Catechism is hardly an offset to the risk of chronic rheumatism, and that the "religious atmosphere" of which we hear so much needs to be accompanied by an invigorating physical atmosphere with a good supply of oxygen. It may be heresy to suggest that sanitary schools are a primary need in education of every sort.

"The Dominion" had better be careful, or he will be suspected of Freethought leanings. After all, ought the churches and chapels to be expected to worry over sanitary considerations? Their chief concern in education is to get the children thoroughly inoculated with religion. And a further concern nowadays is to try to get the generality of ratepayers to pay for it.

John Bull hands out the following "open letter" to the Rev. J. Barksby (Primitive Methodist):—

Rev. Sir,—According to you, "London is a pagan city" because people are ceasing to attend church.

People are ceasing to attend church not because they are abandoning Christianity, but because they are tired of listening to wearisome sermons containing stupid generalizations.

If the clergy would preach sense, not drivel, people would flock back to the churches.

What, is there any more drivel being preached to-day than there was, say, thirty years ago, when the majority of the people went to church?

Prayer is a wonderful thing, and trust in the Lord is another. Methodist parsons are never tired of telling their followers how often and how gladly the Lord responds to both these things. And they can furnish a shoal of witnesses to prove it. They may convince their hearers, but, where the future is concerned, the parsons prefer to rely on something more materially certain. A report of the Methodist Teachers' Annuity Society states that the total amount of investments is £397,587. The ordinary income from subscriptions of members, marriage premiums, etc., is £11,619. Another branch of income includes £20,150 from interest and dividends, also grants from various sources. There is also an Auxiliary Fund, known as the Worn-Out Minister's Fund, which is kindly supplied by Methodist "mugs" at the parsons' request. The Lord may provide for his labourers in the Christian vineyard, and a prophet was fed by a raven. But Methodist parsons believe in not leaving too much to God, in case he forgets.

Buxton spends Sunday quietly and respectably. We have that on the authority of a pious observer looking around for something cheering to say about local chapels. He also noted, no doubt with a deep sign of regret, that there were lots of young people, with rucksacs on their backs passing through the streets. And all day long pleasure seeking motorists and cyclists were hurrying through the town. This means, of course, that they were giving the chapels a very gladsome miss, and doubtlessly encouraging chapel clients to "come and do likewise"—which was not at all a good thing for the parsons' Sunday trading. Anyway, the pleasure-seekers did not miss much by staying away from one chapel. The parson let himself go on "Love is kind," a sample of which is: "A revival of simple kindness would be the best revival we could have," and "There is no room in this world for hard Christians." The preacher, we gather, was talking out of personal experience with his congregation. If he mixed more with the non-religious majority, he would know that there is to-day more kindness and less brutality than ever there was.

Some lugubrious news was forthcoming for pious supporters at the British Missionary Societies' Conference, at Swanwick. The Rev. W. Paton enlarged on the Menace of Secularism. He was amazed, during a recent visit to India and the Near East, to notice the growth in India of irreligion. Among educated men there was a growing feeling that religion was of no use in the world of to-day. This was the opinion of many men of undoubted serious purpose wholeheartedly committed to the service of their fellow-men. In South India there was a new paper, *Revolt*, dedicated to "the abolition of Religion and the promotion of Social Reform." In the Near East there was a drifting away from religion; science was taking the place of religion; there was a development of an outlook upon life utterly divorced from religion. Islam was being critically reviewed by its own followers, some of whom said it was below what their conscience showed them to be right and true. As regards China, Chinese thought was moving in the direction of finding a body of principles around which to gather, and was finding them in the teaching of Sun Yat Sen, instead of in Christ.

All this was said, of course, with the object of impressing on the pious the need for more money for Missionary Societies. The Christian mind is very odd. The more Eastern peoples show they don't want religion, the more the missionaries are determined to push it under the Eastern peoples' noses!

Mr. Paton was obliged to say a few nice things about Secularism. Secularism must not be wholly condemned; much in it is good. The spread of fear and superstition is good. The winning of freedom of thought, and the earnest desire for truth is good. The deep concern for the amelioration of conditions of life, the vital interest in the facts and realities of life—these too are good. We congratulate Mr. Paton on being more honestly outspoken than the general run of missionaries, and thank him for his unsolicited testimonial to Secularism. It will cheer Freethinkers immensely to know they are engaged in doing such good work.

Now that we have a Labour Government with 8,000,000 behind it we may be sure that a great number of parsons will discover that Jesus Christ would have joined the Labour Party were he to be here. Labour leaders may be trusted not to contradict them in this, although they have to keep an eye on the Roman Catholics, for that Church is not by any means favourably inclined to Socialism. Still, this situation is interesting, and there is a grim humour in politicians, and popularly hunting parsons making Jesus Christ an appendage to the Labour Movement.

Freethinkers are often asked whether they deny Christianity has ever been productive of good? We commend to those who ask the question the following. The other

day 300 members of the Four Square Gospel Alliance had an open-air bath under the ministrations of the chief dipper, Pastor Jefferies. One of those dipped, an old man with a long flowing beard, confessed that he had waited thirty years for the dip. We are left wondering what would have happened if the Four Square Gospel had never reached these shores? Was the poor old gentleman waiting for a bath or for a baptism only? Avoidance of a bath was, once upon a time a well-known indication of a genuinely saintly character.

The Black Country clergy are in arms against Sunday boxing. The Rev. Ambrose Allcock, of Darlaston, explains that the movement is not against boxing, but against these boxing contests being held "at the same time as our morning services." If the clergy had been as concerned about the conditions of labour as they are about boxing contest attracting people from Church the world might have been the better for it. First the cycle, then the motor, then the cinema, now boxing. Is there anything against which the "glorious gospel of Jesus" is able to stand? It does not look like there is. Withdraw the policeman, and the policy of suppression and the gospel soon topples over.

Other preachers have also been protesting. Canon Leteux, Roman Catholic, says there is a boxing contest held within forty yards of his chapel. Probably he has noted signs of eagerness on the part of his worshippers to get away to the boxing, instead of being entranced by his sermon. Adjutant Sach, of the Salvation Army, says, "I am against it, others should be made to stop it at once." The impertinence of the latter gentleman is worth noting. "I do not agree with it, therefore it should not be permitted." Give these people enough power, and life would hardly be worth the living.

Some parsons are getting quite rational nowadays. Here is the Dean of Lladaff telling a St. Asaph Conference that:—

Mystery is a thing which, so far as possible, should be done away with. A large proportion of the clergy had got to be very mysterious, and a delicious thrill went down their backs when they talked about the mystery of the Church Sacraments and the Trinity like a lot of Fiji Islanders.

Hear! Hear! But fancy a religion without mystery! Why it would not last a year. And just when the clergy are coming back to the position that a certain part of the world must be ruled off from that dealt with by science and reserved for religion. It is not often we find ourselves in whole-souled agreement with a Dean, but it is the case now—particularly the comparison of the clergy with the Fiji Islanders—even at the risk of offending the Fiji Islanders. And that raises the question, "How is anyone to believe in Christianity without sinking to the level of the Fiji Islanders? We mean the original ones, for we believe the present-day ones are very much improved, and it is likely they wink the other eye when the Christian medicine-man spins his yarns to them."

One may say what one will, but Catholicism is a good summer religion. It is pleasant to lie on the benches of these old cathedrals, one prays and dreams and sins in thought, to enjoy there a queer devotion, a pious *dolce far niente*; the Madonnas bend so forgivingly from their niches, their womanly nature forgives even the confusing of the divine features in sinful reveries; and for the overflow of conscience there stands in every corner the necessary brown box, whereby ones sins can be solved.

Heine, "Travel Sketches."

How the good God must laugh in heaven when he hears Wellington, the little Corporal, the Pope, Rothschild, and a whole chorus of knightlings, stockjobbers, pastors, and Turks praying at the same time for the safety of the Crescent!—Heine "Travel Sketches."

National Secular Society

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W. PEARCE (Freemantle).—The story of the recantation of Charles Bradlaugh is one of the stock religious lies. His daughter, Mrs. Bradlaugh Bonner, kept and published an accurate account of his last moments.

C. S. FRASER.—We note your appreciation of the *Four Lectures*. We agree that it is advisable to give exact preferences for statements made, but in a lecture this is not always necessary. The quotation from the Roman Catholic publications came from, as was stated, *A Sight of Hell*, published by Duffy & Co. Lecky, *History of European Morals*, will give you plenty of illustrations of the charges brought against Christians.

A. B. MOSS.—Thanks. Will appear in an early issue.

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.

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The "Freethinker" will be forwarded direct from the publishing office at the following rates (Home and Abroad):—
One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

Sugar Plums.

We are constantly receiving letters asking us for information connected with the subject of Materialism, and by writers who have evidently not troubled to get a copy of our *Materialism Restated*. We would not mind answering them at length, or even send them a free copy of the book, in which they would in nearly every case find the answers to their questions. But funds will not permit the one method, and time forbids the other. We lead a busy life, and we suggest that it is hardly fair to expect us to sit down and write lengthy disquisitions for private use, when we have already stated the answers in a book that can be bought for half-a-crown. The man who reads the book and wants some particular point elucidating is on quite a different footing.

We take this opportunity of saying that we have been more pleased with the reception given to *Materialism Restated*, than with anything we have yet done. It was evidently a book that was wanted, and the way in which it has been received by *Freethinker* readers is a testimony to their quality. If there is a journal in the country with readers of a better quality than we have, we have yet to make its acquaintance.

Many of our readers will regret to learn that for the present, at least, *The Contraventionist* will cease to appear. Difficulties have, we understand, arisen with the proprietor of the magazine, and it is in a state of suspended animation. This is a great pity, as we understand the journal was quite a success, and paid its way from the outset. Whether it will be revived, or another journal on the same lines started, remains to be seen. But it is a pity that the only magazine which actually did give both sides of the case is no longer in existence.

The Chicago University Rationalist Society has elected Mr. George Bedborough as its President for the ensuing year.

Mount Pleasant is a Post Office building through which London's parcels pass. A paper recalls the fact that, where it stands was once the site of Coldbath Fields Prison. This had so evil a reputation that Coleridge depicted the Devil visiting it:—

He smiled well pleased
For it gave him a hint,
For improving his prisons in Hell.

This serves to remind one that the prisons of that day were what they were because Christians believed "sinners" should be vindictively punished with a foretaste of Hell. Our present-day prisons have improved only since prison authorities and public opinion have become less Christian and more humane. Let us not forget it.

TRAGEDY.

It has been said that tragedy purifies the affections by terror and pity. That is, it substitutes imaginary sympathy for mere selfishness. It gives us a high and permanent interest, beyond ourselves, in humanity as such. It raises the great, the remote, and the possible to an equality with the real, the little, and the near. It makes man a partaker with his kind. It subdues and softens the stubbornness of his will. It teaches him that there are and have been others like himself, by showing him as in a glass what they have felt, thought, and done. It opens the chambers of the human heart. It leaves nothing indifferent to us that can affect our common nature. It excites our sensibility by exhibiting the passions wound up to the utmost pitch by the power of imagination or the temptation of circumstances; and corrects their fatal excesses in ourselves by pointing to the greater extent of sufferings and of crimes to which they have led others. Tragedy creates a balance of the affections. It makes us thoughtful spectators in the lists of life. It is the refiner of the species; a discipline of humanity.

William Hazlitt.

The Second Apparition of Mrs. Veal.

WHEN Monsieur Drelincourt's *Book of Death*, after being abroad a good while, came again to the printers, Mr. Defoe made a preface for it, wherein he tells how a young lady of Dover, Mrs. Veal by name, appeared shortly upon her decease to a friend of hers, one, Mrs. Bargrave, of Canterbury. It was at noon on Friday, the 7th of September, in the year 1705, that Mrs. Veal, having a few hours before "received the sacrament," departed this life; and it was at noon on the following day that she came to the house of Mrs. Bargrave. This lady hearing a knock, and being then by herself, opened the door, and upon seeing Mrs. Veal she felt much joy, and some little surprise, because although they were familiar with each other from a very tender age, and had always nourished a mutual kindness and esteem, yet, nevertheless, for a year or more there had been a breach of intercourse between them by reason of circumstances nowise affecting their amity. Mrs. Veal who was known to have been unwell for some time, but who now looked in very good health, wore "a riding habit," which, however, it seems was only a garment to cover her dress, for we hear that as the ladies were sitting together, Mrs. Bargrave, to divert Mrs. Veal, "took hold of her gown sleeve several times, and commended it [whereupon] Mrs. Veal told her it was scoured silk, and newly made-up"; besides which, two days later, Mrs. Watson, wife of Captain Watson, cousin of Mrs. Veal, having heard from Mrs. Bargrave how Mrs. Veal had been to see her, "and what gown she had on, and how striped," exclaimed at once, "you have seen her indeed, for none knew, but Mrs. Veal and myself, that the gown was scoured." At that time people rode less for pleasure, and more from necessity than they do now, and many rode then who would never think of riding now if they were here. Thus it is very likely that in those days, ladies would mount the saddle in other habitments than they do in ours, which is quite enough to vindicate on this point the consistency of the account given by Mrs. Bargrave to Mr. Defoe. It seems that Mrs. Veal had several reasons for thus calling upon her friend, but of these, the chief one was a desire to extol Monsieur Drelincourt's *Book of Death*, the sale of which became very favourably affected by her remarkable testimony. There is no need to say more of this, the first apparition of Mrs. Veal, because, as we have observed, Mr. Defoe, whom all acknowledge to have been a man of uncommon parts and a great master of language, has set it forth at much length, after having inquired into it very closely. For what concerns the lady's second apparition, it falls no way behind her first in the matter of evidence, and would have made as much noise as that did had it been published by the same pen; but it was hushed up very soon, and has only of late been discovered. The story of it was written about the time, yet never put into print, and the writer wanted both the wit, and the fame, of Mr. Defoe, though he came up to him in vivacity, which after all is the thing most to be desired. How he was acquainted with the affair we know not, but he relates it very authentically with other matters in his treatise, *Of the Mysteries of the Invincible World*. This is a work meanly done in Latin, and without any man's name to it; but a very ingenious and honourable gentleman, Mr. Peter Hindemarshe, the antiquary, who found it among some old documents at his Hall in the County of Suffolk, has made out that it was one of a great bundle of sermons and other papers, which a Mr. Tuckwell, who held the incumbency of the parish over a hundred and

ninety years ago, gave in payment unto the keeper of an ale-house, in whose debt he stood, having lost his savings in the business called the South Sea Bubble. Moreover, the said Mr. Hindemarshe, on comparing the manuscript with the entries made by Parson Tuckwell, in the Register of the Parish, found them both to be in the same hand; whence he concludes that Mr. Tuckwell wrote the former, as he certainly did the latter. This is enough to settle all doubts, so we may proceed to the narrative. On the 7th of September, 1710, Mrs. Veal kept the fifth return of the day of her death with much edification, in the company of certain of her present estate; and on the next day she was affected with a mighty desire to see this or the other of her friends who were still in the flesh. At last she was fain to visit one of them, and made choice of Mrs. Watson, her cousin, Captain Watson's wife. The twinkling of an eye was long enough for the journey before her, yet she could not bring herself to set out upon it, being under a doubt as to wherewithal she should be clad. Let not the reader injuriously suppose that the warmth of her abode was too great for the wearing of garments, or that she had nothing to appear in. Far, otherwise. She was in possession of all the good things which are known to attend virtue after death as a full and un-failing recompense for the privations it has to endure in life. In that happy clime the ardour of the sun is ever tempered by gentle zepthers; and the ladies have such a number of suits,* that they never incur the danger of being mortified by having to put on a "scoured" gown. This superabundance, and not any straightness of circumstances, was the thing that set Mrs. Veal in doubt as to how she should be clothed. For having a great deal of very fine apparel, she felt much uncertainty about what would be the most becoming to take upon the present occasion. The point is one that never leaves the sex indifferent, but it was of peculiar importance to Mrs. Veal, because, having been a little below Mrs. Watson in circumstances, and greatly under her lead in the matter of fashion, she was much afraid of giving her pain by appearing in any garment which might make it seem that she had had some loss of fortune or of taste since they were parted. What then should she wear? The ladies whom she was at present acquainted with, are known to have no liking for colours; but they have a foible for white, and often array themselves in it, when coming to pay visits upon the earth. This use, however, Mrs. Veal disapproved of, not as esteeming that at five and thirty she was beyond the age for the putting on of white; but because she held that frequency had made it vulgar, and that were it never so uncommon, a person of breeding would find it much too pretentious as well as too striking for any such purpose as that in question. There being now but grey and black to choose from, she resolved upon black, thinking it the more genteel, and the less apt to betray her years. The next point had to do with the stuff, a matter of no less delicacy and importance than the one already decided upon. As we have said, she desired to spare Mrs. Watson the pain of supposing her to have declined in condition or in elegance during their separation; but, besides this she wished to save herself the displeasure of seeing her character unfavourably judged by her friends, owing to a lack of prudence on her own part. In particular, she feared the doing of anything that might hurt the reputation that she got by her testimony to Monsieur Drelincourt's *Book of Death*; and inasmuch as she knew

* In Mr. Defoe's time the word "suit" was used of female attire. His dear Mrs. Flanders visits her attorney "in a new suit of second mourning"; and she receives "a suit of black silk clothes" from a mercer as part of an indemnity settled by arrangement.

very well how many wrong notions are spread abroad in the sensible world about the conduct besecming to those who left it, she made a firm resolution of avoiding whatever might give her the appearance of having acquired a fondness for pomps and vanities. With these thoughts she began to search through her wardrobe. As death is unknown in those parts, she possessed no mourning, which indeed would have been ridiculous for her to put on on this occasion. The considerations aforesaid, and the circumstances that the visit to be paid was one of ceremony no less than of friendship, moved her to take something that should be rich, yet withal of a certain gravity and soberness. For this cloth would be too mean; besides having worn silk at Mrs. Bargrave's, she could not wear cloth at Mrs. Watson's. Upon the other hand, though she had many silken garments of all sorts, some flowered, some corded, some of satin, some of velvet, yet the most of them were of such goodliness, that they might perchance be deemed unfit for a lady who had so warmly commended Mr. Drelincourt's *Book of Death*, when at the point of leaving the only world in which her sex seems likely to indulge the weakness of display. Hence she declined her bravest attire, though with some little inquietude at the thought of the pleasure Mrs. Watson must lose by not seeing her in any of it. She turned next to her gowns of taffetas, but would have none of them, as thinking they bespoke frivolity. At last, having found something to her mind, she took it, and departed, after gazing much upon her mirror. The very next moment Mrs. Watson, being then in her boudoir, and having the treatise of Monsieur Delincourt in her hand, heard a crispish rustle upon the staircase, and anon a tapping at the door. "Come in," said she, and straightway entered Mrs. Veal, who had on a great hoop, and a gown of black watered silk with a rare device and most chaste reflections; which habit gave her much elegance of the genteel sort, tempered very finely by dignity and a pensive grace, "Lack a day, child," cried Mrs. Watson, "whence hast thou thy suit, mine for Sundays, is not half so good."

C. CLAYTON DOVE.

Rationalization in the Scottish Churches.

HERESY has been described as a crime created only by the Christians themselves, in their own conflicts. Heresy hunts or prosecution before the Church Courts were at one time common in Presbyterian Scotland. The points involved were usually trivial, and need not detain us. But during the latter half of the nineteenth century, the number of trials gradually decreased, and since the opening of this century there have been few, if any. The reason probably is that although Presbyterian clergyman sign an obsolete confession of faith, so much latitude by way of definition is allowed by means of Declaratory Acts, especially in the group of Free Churches known as the United Free Church, that denunciation is difficult, and might easily recoil on the former.

There is, however, one notable exception, even to-day. The Free Church of Scotland, commonly called the "wee frees," holds by the old doctrine, and asserts, rightly, I think, that it is possible for an infidel to become minister of any Scottish Presbyterian Church—always excepting, of course, the Kirk of the Wee Frees. Taking "Infidel" —"Traitor," the Wee Free is right.

As an illustration of the changed attitude, let me remind you that only seventy-five years ago the Presbytery of Edinburgh, acting as the mouthpiece of Presbyterian Scotland, and with the approval of the Press, proposed to the Government that a day of fasting and prayer should be ordered; in order to stop the cholera epidemic then raging. The Prime Minister snubbed them, much

to their indignation. The story as it is told in the pages of Buckle's History, is scarcely credible, yet it is true.

Six years later came *The Origin of Species*, and we seem to hear the echoes of the controversy even yet. Four years later still—in 1863—came Lyell's *Antiquity of Man*, to push home the argument. A few years more and the exigencies of party politics brought about compulsory education. Much may be said of the deficiencies of Board School Education, but this may be said in its favour, that the knowledge which was in former days directly accessible to the few, is now open to the multitude. Except in a few cases we no longer get sermons on the Virgin Birth, the Fall or Atonement. To put it frankly, the clergy know that the people don't accept these stories now, and they act accordingly. The "Popular" subjects now are Swedenborg's *Idea of Beauty*, or *The Religion of Lorna Doone*, and such like.

A never-failing subject, and one which deserves our attention for a moment is Sabbath Observance. What did Our Lord mean when He said, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath?" And while I am writing comes the latest answers in the form of the Annual Reports of the three Presbyterian Churches, the Established, the United Free and the Wee Free. The last-named may be dismissed at once. The fourth commandment says such and such, and there is nothing else to be said there is no room or need for compromise. On the other hand, a joint committee of the other churches states that "the old Scottish Sabbath cannot be restored." No rules for the right observance can be laid down. The problem is "to indicate a way of observing the Sunday which would be in harmony with New Testament teaching, and in keeping with the needs of modern life. And the only solution given is the need to retain the old reverence and the newer freedom. In other words so soon as you admit the New Testament teaching and the modern life in the same sentence "harmony" ceases to be possible. Meantime, the poor clergyman will go on reviewing the Girl Guides as chaplain to the (rifle-less) Boys' Brigade, and all the while the people are passing away from the Churches and those who are left are, in the main, apathetic.

On that side the Secularist has nothing to fear.

Of late years there has been a movement for the Union of Scottish Presbyterian Churches, and the culmination will take place in October next with the Union of the biggest pair. Once again we have to dismiss the Wee Frees. Numerically few they know themselves to be—but they have the only True Gospel. They will defend Scotland against the infidel clergy being taught in the Colleges of the other Churches. But unite? Never!

The movement is said to have made rapid strides in recent years, but like some others, seems to be largely a newspaper and not a popular movement. One hears of and knows of meetings where not 1 per cent of the members were present, and of unanimous votes where no amendment was permitted. What will happen when the Church tries to dispossess the dissenting congregations remains to be seen. Meantime the speeches and reports of some of the leaders read like the prospectus of a new combine with all the talk about closing and disposing of redundant churches, combining congregations and uniting parishes. Yet even the flapper passes by, and where she goes the other half of youth usually follows. These reports are none the less worthy of our attention. We hear of the millions to be paid to the Pope by the Italian Government, but what of the millions nearer home? The Church of Scotland (Property and Endowment) Act was passed in 1925, and covers the changes necessary to the acquirement of a great deal of property of which they were formerly only the users and under strict supervision. The transfer of all these manse, churches and other properties is not yet completed, but the heritors, in addition to putting the buildings into proper repair, have already paid over nearly half a million pounds. And the committee goes on to say, "It must also be kept in view that the value of the properties now acquired by the Church probably exceeded in amount the sum of £10,000,000 sterling—exclusive of the sums so received from the heritors." (They don't say The Son of Man hath nowhere to lay his head).

On that side is there anything to fear? I think not. Leading Divines have by means of addresses, newspaper articles, etc., etc., try to lead movements for the control of Catholic immigration from Ireland. But so many of their statements were so obviously untrue that serious people paid no attention. Recently there was an attempt to stop irregular marriages. But the public know that the marriages referred to are in every way legal, children are legitimate property passes just the same as in the case of so-called "regular" marriages. That also failed as did the attempt to get the railwaymen to strike against Sunday trains. The latest example of Ecclesiastical impertinence and humour was also hopless from the start. That was the attempt to alter the date of the General Election in Scotland to suit the annual meetings of the Scottish Churches! Hard things were said about Mr. Baldwin and his lack of foresight of this date clashing!

But one of the hindrances to activity in all sorts of Societies is the apathy of the average member. And if the Churches got rid of this handicap, they have a splendid weapon to fight anti-religious movements with. Can they? We will have to wait and see.

No man ever sees a Religion die, but those of us now living are witnessing the desperate efforts of the Churches to keep alive. E.H.

The Making of a Sceptic.

WHEN I was a child my parents discovered that distant objects, which were visible to them, were beyond my range of vision. Since then I have worn spectacles, and now I am accustomed to the larger world which they have opened to me. But sometimes I have dreamed that I have been obliged to return to the older, narrower world, wherein the elm-trees at the end of the garden do not exist. The birds pass over me unobserved. Yet it is a worse dream to imagine that I have never seen the trees and the birds; that I am not acquainted with their form and movement; that I shall never see what other men delight to watch.

In the world of thought it is thus. From time to time, through a fog of ready-made ideas, man obtains a glimpse of the truth. A momentary glimpse, and then he plunges into everlasting darkness. But more terrible is the fate of those who only suspect that somewhere, beyond the narrow prison of their mind, there is a boundless land of light.

To-day the doctor has told me that my eyesight cannot be saved. It is leaving me slowly, as the light of the sun passes from mountain peaks. It departs as reluctantly as the sunlight, unwilling to go, unable to remain. It gives me a last caress, reveals to me a cherry orchard, white with bloom. But to-morrow it will have abandoned me for ever. So I must gather the harvest of my twenty years, the harvest of the things that I have seen. I shall gather them into the garner of my mind, and there I shall store them for the long days that are to come. I shall preserve them carefully, as a widow collects every memory and relic of the husband whom she has lost.

Already the world is dim. I see it through a frosted window. There are no sharp lines only vague masses of colour and light and shade. Soon, amidst an eternal darkness, I shall try to reconstruct the things I have seen—snow-clad mountains; the smile on the face of a boy; sunlight in the clearing of a beech-wood; the pure colours of water, seen from the side of a boat; soft clouds, tinged with gold; a Scottish loch at sunset; an Oxford garden; the greens and blue of Corot . . . Then, as the image of a dead friend gradually becomes dim in our memory, so will these shapes and colours fade within me. Until, with the passing of the years, I shall even doubt the possibility of their existence.

GEORGE PENDLE.

Deeply moved such times with sorrow,
I recalled the words of Schiller:
"What in song shall live for ever
Must have perished first in Life."

Heine, "Ata Troll."

Christianity in Aberdeen.

THE Aberdeen United Free Church ministers, have resumed their campaign, for a gayer Sunday evening on the market place.

The opening star was the Rev. Alexander Fraser, of Gerrard Street, who was advertised to speak on the subject: "Is there a God?"

Fraser tackled his subject by telling some funny stories about ministers; stories surprisingly and entirely irrelevant to his subject; stories of the congregational social meeting type; finishing his whole address in fifteen minutes. Fifteen minutes to tackle a subject, on which whole libraries have been written! What a brain!

Fraser, like all philosophers of his type, propounds a false theory as to the nature of things, and then shows that wicked actions, are those which show that his theory is false.

There was only one question asked, by an earnest and anxious inquirer—a Mr. Heaton—and then ensued the following dialogue:—

Mr. Fraser: Do you go to a Church?

Mr. Heaton: Yes.

Mr. Fraser: Which Church?

Mr. Heaton: Greenfields.

Mr. Fraser: Then go and ask Dr. Greenfields, the answer to that question.

The meeting then broke up; there was much enthusiasm amongst the pious; atheists, infidels, agnostics, and rationalists, slunk off, utterly routed. Routed by baldersdash; by the surmisers; the probable wasters; the must have beeners; the conjecturers; the supposers; the inferiors; and the large army of gentlemen who use their heads for a hat rack, and not for thinking.

On the succeeding Sunday, the Rev. John Rankine, was billed to appear; his subject being "What God is Like."

Being curious to come into contact with a man, who had met a God, and could describe what he was like, I went down to the Castlegate. I am sorry to say, I am no wiser, than I was before.

The Rev. John Rankine—who has a face and accent like Harry Lauder—treated the subject, on the lines of broad burlesque. He had three answers, to all but the most trivial questions: (1) I don't know. (2) Really I don't know. (3) Frankly I don't know. When, towards the close, he said: "That is the most interesting question I have been asked," a man in the crowd called out "That will be ene that ye ken."

Mr. Rankine made the statement that through theology a man could never know God.

Think of it! Several hundreds per year, and a free house, for talking on a subject, about which one "really and frankly" doesn't know!

Why try sheep farming in Australia or canning mutton in New Zealand; or wheat growing in Canada; or prospecting for gold in the Yukon; when a mine like this, lies waiting for exploitation in Aberdeenshire?

N.R.

You may take it that those are beautiful and genuine effects of sublimity which please always, and please all. For when men of different habits, lives, ambitions, ages, all take one and the same view about the same writings, the verdict and pronouncement of such dissimilar individuals give a powerful assurance, beyond all gainsaying, in favour of that which they admire.

Longinus, "A Treatise Concerning Sublimity."

Wherever the disbelief in the supernatural has arisen from *a priori* considerations, and expressed itself, not with allegations of conscious fraud against the devotees of religion, nor with attempts to explain it away as merely mental realism, but with assertions that miracles are impossible, and nature an unchanging whole; this disbelief, whether insinuating itself into the defence of Christianity, or marking the attack on it, has been a reproduction of Spinoza.—Dr. A. S. Farrar, "A Critical History of Freethought in Reference to the Christian Religion."

Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I hope Mr. L. Corinna will be able to provide more translations of articles concerning Freethought in other countries. Such articles as *Propaganda Work in Russia*, are suggestive of new methods, and of new angles of approach to old problems. If N.S.S. Branches would read the articles from this viewpoint, the Movement might perhaps accelerate its progress.

I much enjoyed *The Mistakes of Science*. Are there not other religious attacks on Science which the same writer could tackle in a similar way?

The more I look at the picture of Epstien's *Night*, the more I think how happily the sculpture depicts the result of the Christian Church's conquest of men's minds. The distortion of the figures shows real inspiration.

D.P.S.

RELIGION AND SCIENCE.

SIR,—Would you kindly accept the following correction in my paper published in your journal last week, and entitled "The Mistakes of Science"? In place of "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 . . . Viewing Mr. Gould's article, then in this light, it possesses the two features proper to its type." read: "Before expounding the several points of criticism (few enough, you will be pleased to hear, and sufficiently definite to lend themselves to a terse exposition), let us make a mental note of the fact that Mr. Gould's argument, whether or not he intended it to do so, succeeds in throwing a general discredit upon Science as a whole, and that whatever serves to discredit Science serves to uphold Religion . . . Viewing Mr. Gould's article then, as we must, in the light of a religious attack upon Science, we find that it possesses the two features to its type." May I take this opportunity of acknowledging that the above errors in the text have resulted from my failure to send you the corrected proofs; which default, in its turn, is due to the fact that, despite my precautions to guard against propaganda of all kinds, my son, aged two, somehow came into possession of these proofs on their arrival, and, evidently forming his own opinion of them, tore them up and deposited the remnants in the coal-scuttle.

I much regret that this act of filial disrespect should have resulted in the necessity of an amendment so long-winded.

C. H. ROSS CARMICHAEL.

Society News.

The first week's campaign of Mr. Whitehead held in the district of Bolton during the present season proved the most successful series of the year. The Bolton meetings are held on the Town Hall steps, for which there is always intense competition among would be speakers. The usual attempts were made by religious bigots of various denominations to prevent Mr. Whitehead from utilizing the pitch, but by dint of arriving a couple of hours before the advertised time on each occasion, our speaker managed to obtain seven meetings in Bolton, and an extra Sunday evening meeting at Wigan.. The Bolton meetings generated much interest and excitement.

Before the time announced for the lectures numerous people were on the spot, and on each occasion, when rival meetings were in progress on the opposite side of the Town Hall steps, the Secularist platform easily attracted the greatest crowds. The friendly feeling of the crowds in general, and the numerous expressions of congratulation for the speaker testify that Secularism has gained in Bolton since the first outdoor meetings held by us a few years ago

evoked bitter expressions of hostility not unmingled with threats.

The one meeting held in Wigan witnessed an even more striking transformation. The audience here rocked with laughter at a recital of theological absurdities, whereas two years ago on the same pitch, the opposition was almost riotous, the lecturer indeed having a lens of his glasses broken by some missile flung by a zealot.

Messrs. Sisson and Partington, as usual, were indefatigable in helping to make the campaign a success. On Saturday, June 29, Mr. Whitehead commences a week's mission in Wigan Market.

CHESTER-LE-STREET BRANCH.

WEST STANLEY provided us with the largest meeting yet held in the district. The gathering was so large that at the request of the police we moved to a piece of ground where a larger space was available without interfering with public traffic. Some threats of violence from a Roman Catholic section was quickly discounted by the friendly action of the larger part of the gathering, and the speeches of Mr. Brighton and others were listened to with attention and appreciation. Mr. Brighton, Mr. Raine, and Mr. Birtley were the speakers, and much satisfaction was expressed when further meetings were promised. There were many inquiries as to the possibility of Mr. Chapman Cohen visiting the district during the autumn, and it is hoped to comply with the request. There was no mistaking the general sympathy with the Movement.—J.B.

MR. J. CLAYTON'S LECTURES.

THE first visit of the season was paid to Higham on Monday, and although denied use of the old stand, on Council's property, a new one was soon found. The lecture was given without interruption, and questions were dealt with afterwards.

On Tuesday a good meeting was held at Padiham with an unusually big crowd.

Thursday's meeting was on new ground, at Clitheroe. Freethought lectures are an innovation there, and attracted a lot of attention, if not too much sympathy. The speaker was very warmly congratulated by two gentlemen afterwards, one of whom, a local man, has promised support on next visit.

Sunday morning, lectured at the I.L.P. Rooms, Nelson, to a good audience. Numerous questions were dealt with, and some opposition was put up. Todmorden was visited Sunday night, but the weather was bad here, the only opposition offered.

Obituary.

MR. WILLIAM HENRY BORRIE.

ON Wednesday, June 19, the remains of William Henry Borrie were interred in Streatham Park Cemetery. He was a convinced Freethinker, and a very enthusiastic worker for the Cause in the days of Charles Bradlaugh. In later days other calls were made upon his time, but his Freethought principles were always to the front, and earned for him the respect of his comrades, a number of whom assembled at the graveside to bid him farewell. He was still active at seventy-six years of age, the immediate cause of death being bronchitis, brought on by a chill.

His wish for a Secular funeral was honoured by the family, and the service was read by Mr. R. H. Rosetti.

And even in our own times, have we not seen the people terrified at the sight of a flaming comet? Has not the end of the world, foretold by the agency of comets, been often enough predicted? These predictions, so to speak, are periodic; they crop up each time that the return of these cosmical formations is announced by astronomers, and always meet with a certain number of timid souls who are troubled as to their destinies.

Camille Flammarion, "Astronomy for Amateurs."

Clear Thinking.

Bacon, in his famous *Novum Organum*, set out to discover the reason for men's errors of judgment, a piece of work containing a wealth of teaching to all . . . students, . . . inasmuch as the power to reason soundly is one of the greatest assets such students . . . can possess. In the course of his inquiry Bacon enumerated four main causes, his four famous "idols," as he termed them, of which only one, his third, will here be treated. That third "idol" he sums up as follows: "For men imagine that their reason governs words, whilst, in fact, words re-act upon the understanding." Or, in other terms, though words and phrases are excellent servants, they are bad masters; for when they become masters they lead the reason into unjustifiable ways."

The "idol" divides itself into two main classes: first, the too extended use and credence given to metaphors and slogans; and second, the use of loose, non-uniquely defined words.

To consider the employment of metaphors and slogans first. They are, indeed, dangerous things to use; for once started they keep the matter under discussion in a groove, the groove of the attributes connoted by the particular metaphor or slogan, which attributes are carried over, generally falsely, to the point under review. There is perhaps no greater foe to sound thinking than a metaphor or a slogan that has taken the bit between its teeth. The history of thinking is full of such metaphors and slogans that have led men astray. They are to be found in all branches of knowledge, and some of the greatest thinkers have come under their sway. A matter comes up for discussion, someone introduces some such slogan, and all too often the matter is considered clenched and settled. The student must indeed scrutinize slogans and metaphors minutely before accepting them.

In the second place, there is the question of loose use of words and terms. Once again the advice to be given to the student . . . is that he must be clear, crystal clear, as to the meaning of the terms that he uses, and must adopt every possible means to secure the essential clarity. Especially is this the case with regard to technical terminology . . . Definition of technical terms is all important; . . . every term must have a unique and unequivocal meaning. If clear thinking be the object sought—and there be few better objects—a strict use of terms is essential. There can be no clear reasoning if vagueness of terminology be allowed. Words are the very counters of thinking: but counters need diligent and close attention.

William Pick, B.Sc. ("Pitman's Journal.")

Communism.

I MAY not make the sacrifice
That all endures,
Until I read in glowing eyes—
"Mine—and yours!"

I dare not ask a Love that aims
At proof or sign,
Until I meet the soul that claims—
"Yours—and mine!"

J. M. STUART-YOUNG.

AN active young member of N.S.S. desires employment. Would be prepared to take any situation, clerical, or anything which does not demand an intimate knowledge of machinery. Would be willing to help local branch, or form new branch if need be.—Apply, FREETHINKER, Box J.T.V., 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

Lecture notices must reach 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.5, by the FIRST POST ON TUESDAY, or they will not be inserted.

LONDON.

INDOOR.

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (The London Institution Theatre, South Place, Moorgate, E.C.2): 11.0, S. K. Ratcliffe—"Can Party Government Survive?"

THE NON-POLITICAL METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (The Orange Tree Hotel, Euston Road, N.W.1): Thursday, July 4, at 101 Tottenham Court Road, 7.30 to 11.30, Social and Dance. Admission 1s.

OUTDOOR.

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.

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

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N.S.S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand): 3.15, Mr. R. H. Rosetti—A Lecture.

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GLASGOW BRANCH N.S.S.—Ramble to Crookston Castle. Meet at Crookston Road at 12 o'clock prompt.

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WIGAN.—Mr. George Whitehead will begin a week's campaign, lecturing as follows in Wigan Market: Saturday, June 29, at 7.0; Sunday, at 3.0 and 7.0; and rest of the week at 7.30.

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