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

Views and Opinions.

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Science and Religion.

A GREAT deal of use has been made of the name of Professor Eddington, both in the pulpit and in the press, to support the assumption that recent scientific speculations afford some sort of a basis for religious belief. So far as Professor Eddington is concerned the use of his name is quite without warranty. He deliberately disowns any such conviction. Here are his words:—

It is probably true that the recent changes in scientific thought removes some of the obstacles to a reconciliation of religion with science; but this must carefully be distinguished from my proposal to base religion on scientific discovery. For my own part I am wholly opposed to any such attempt.

There is also a well-merited rebuke to those who attempt to identify the object of religious worship—God—with the forces that concern science. The usual theistic arguments, he says,

at the most . . . lead to a belief that behind the workings of the physical universe there is need to postulate a universal creative spirit, or it may be content with the admission that such an inference is not excluded. But there is little in this that can affect our human outlook. It scarcely amounts even to a personification of nature; God is conceived as an all-pervading force, which for rather academic reasons is not to be counted as forces belonging to physics. Nor does this pantheism awake in us feelings substantially different from those inspired by the physical world—the majesty of the infinitely great, the marvel of the infinitely little. The same feeling of wonder and humility which we feel in the contemplation of the sun and nebulae is offered as before, only a new name written over the altar. Religion does not depend upon the substitution of the word "God" for the word "Nature."

I am not sure that Professor Eddington, in his use of "religion" does not come within the range of his own irony with regard to those who think that anything will do so long as the word "God" is used. But the comment so far as others are concerned is deserved. First of all we have "religion" used to cover any ideal of life from beer-drinking to the much more subtle form of intoxication, theosophic meditation. Then as "religion" covers anything in which a man believes, it is only a step to personifying the ideal and calling it "God." So a double purpose is served. First, it keeps all who wish it within the bounds of social respectability; next, it enables the professional religionist to claim any number of men as believers in "God," and that makes a parson as happy as a pill-vendor opening a new batch of letters praising the excellence of his preparation. The fact that if a man is religious he should really have a religion, and that if he believes in deity he should really have a God passes without notice.

* * *

The Unseen World.

One cannot touch pitch—without being defiled, and anyone who dabbles over much with religion is bound sooner or later to bear traces of the contact. So even while Professor Eddington is blaming the ordinary religionist for imagining that in ringing the changes on a word he can save the situation, it is not long, in paving the way for his own conception of religion, before he exhibits the same fault. Take, for instance, his title *Science and the Unseen World*. In some connexions "Unseen" might be a quite harmless word; in the present case it is certainly a tendencious, if not a question-begging one. There is, of course, a sense in which science is all the time dealing with an unseen world. Atoms, matter, ether, etc., are all unseen in the optical sense of the word. They are all concepts, part of that "methodological materialism" which Professor Needham rightly says is the very life-blood of science. Science constantly deals with the unseen, and its chief work is the construction of symbols by way of understanding it.

But if Professor Eddington had in mind this unseen world, it would have been quite valueless for religious purposes. He uses the word in another, a religious sense, and for religious purposes only. One might say that this "unseen world" had been created solely for religious uses, much as the Christian Church first developed the idea of hell to frighten people into believing, and then offered the "way of salvation" as the only method of escaping it. For the "unseen world" for which he argues is one that has no relation at all to science. He argues, at least, that science, as he limits the application of the term, cannot deal with it; its laws have no significance for it. In fact the sole function of the unseen

world is that of providing an insoluble mystery, and, as usual, wherever there exists a mystery there is room for religion. It is the kind of world that provides room for the visions of the "mystic," whether the vision be induced by drugs, or by other forms of mental perversion. I will deal with this aspect, later; at present it is enough to note that normal science and normal scientific method give no hope for religion, and also that Professor Eddington's case depends upon a quite arbitrary restriction of "science" to physical science, with the assumption that the failure of "science" to deal with certain classes of experience equals the establishment of the veracity of the religious position. Whether we meet religion in a primitive forest clearing or in the laboratory of the modern scientist it is eternally true that religion is the deification of ignorance.

* * *

Professor Eddington's Handicap.

Having brushed on one side the verbal hog-wash that identifies religion and God with any sort of an abstraction or idea that one may favour, Professor Eddington probably realized that he was leaving precious little room for religion. So he points out that it is

of the very essence of the unseen world that the conception of personality should dominate it . . . I think, therefore, we are not wrong in embodying the significance of the spiritual world to ourselves in the feeling of a personal relationship, for our whole approach to it is bound up with those aspects of consciousness in which personality is centred.

Merely noting the unobtrusive way in which the "unseen"—which is a synonym of ignorance, becomes the positive "spiritual," one must admit that the conclusion is religiously sound. But scientifically it is quite misleading. Religiously the object of worship *must* be a person. You cannot set up a sense of personal relationship to a mere "force," one might as reasonably talk of a feeling of devotion towards the equator. On the other hand, there is a fairly definite idea as to what is meant by personality, whatever discussions may still rage round the term. Personality certainly implies the existence of a group of characteristics that are so far distinctive and particular as to mark off Brown and Smith, and Professor Eddington from the Bishop of London. And whatever reasonable definition we may give of personality, it is certainly not something belonging to an unseen world, but something which belongs to the world we know. Essentially, personality is not even an individual product, one may question whether at any time it is even an individual possession. It is a social product, its significance lies in the association of a man with his fellows, and when that association is broken there is a very decided change in the personality manifested. Personality is, therefore not something that belongs to the unseen, but to the seen, the known, the tangible. And I do not see that Professor Eddington is better justified in giving to the "unseen" a personality and a consciousness, than is the rebuked religionist who imagines he has circumvented the attack of the non-theist by calling the "force" of the physicist "God."

It is strange, but true, that whenever a man of real intelligence tries to set up a religion he ends in being peculiarly absurd. Look at Faraday! Look at Newton! Look at scores of others! However we may explain it, the fact remains. My own explanation is that the very intelligence of such a man gets in his way and beckons him to contradiction and absurdity. A man of primitive or mediocre intelligence states his religion fully, frankly and without

equivocation. He feels none of the difficulties that oppress a better type of mind. His religion is a logical expression of his mental make-up, and we are neither surprised at finding it there, nor sanguine of its removal. Arguments do not affect him, because they do not touch him. But when a more developed and a better-educated type of mind tries to state a religion, troubles multiply. He feels that difficulties are in the way. He makes concessions that are fatal to his case, he introduces conceptions that are fundamentally identical with those he has previously discarded. He cannot be ridiculous in the old way; he will not be completely logical in the new one. If a man is to remain impregnablely religious it is essential that nature should help him to at least the extent of giving him a brain that is not capable of development beyond a certain point. In this respect nature has not been kind to Professor Eddington. A man with the brain of a scientific thinker trying to establish a religion, commences his task with a handicap that is fatal to his chance of success.

CHAPMAN COHEX.

(To be continued.)

'The Complete Christian.'

"The services of the clergy are imaginary, and their payment should be of the same description." *G. W. Foot.*

"The miraculous has become absurd. Gods and phantoms have been driven from the earth and sky. We are living in a natural world."—*Ingersoll.*

A VICTORIAN Bishop of Gloucester was the subject of Matthew Arnold's urbane criticism, and, in the process, achieved immortality. Hundreds of thousands have smiled at the great critic's lines concerning the impulsive ecclesiastic who hoped to do something "for the honour of the godhead." Like a fly in amber this bishop survived, and readers still laugh at the printed page.

Now, there is another tenant of Buckingham Palace, and another Bishop of Gloucester. His theology is just as amusing as that of his predecessor, but there is no Matthew Arnold to hold him up to ridicule. Writers of the present day write for money, for applause, but seldom because they have anything to say. In the absence of criticism theologians grow saucy, and hark back far too often to the days of faith and ignorance.

The present Bishop of Gloucester has been writing in a London newspaper on the Christian Religion, which he describes as:—

Something supremely simple, profound, yet capable of being understood by the simplest and most ignorant Christian, and providing the basis of a philosophy which would be as extensive as the Universe.

To a reader familiar with the sober use of scientific terms, this explanation must appear to be delirious jargon. How can a thing be at once simple and also profound, and appeal to the most ignorant, and be a philosophy of universal importance? Concerning the Christian life, the Bishop is just as hysterical. He says that it is:—

A life of righteousness and purity; a life of service and duty; a life of sacrifice and love.

What on earth does this mean? England is a Christian country, and it has been so for centuries. It possesses a Government which is as nearly like a Young Men's Christian Association as makes no odds. It is littered with churches, chapels, tin-tabernacles and evangelists' tents. There are forty thousand men-of-god who live, more or less, on the offerings of the faithful. But where are the saints?

beings who live "a life of service and duty; a life of sacrifice and love"? The most upright men I know are policemen, but why pursue the painful subject? Too many business men are as crooked as corkscrews; whilst vast numbers of shopkeepers appear to idolize Jack Sheppard more than John the Baptist. Even the clergy, away from their pulpits, are no more high-minded than ship-stewards, a class of men who want rather close observation. Ordinary citizens are not too rigid in these matters. A riverside publican recently reported that he had lost over three hundred glasses on a single Sunday. And there are four Bank Holidays a year. If this were not a Christian country it would seem as if beer would have to be served in fountains with the cups chained up. The search for the dodo, or the egg of the Great Auk, is a simple matter compared with the search for a real Christian, one who corresponds with the Bishop's definition.

The Bishop of Gloucester insists that "the most necessary belief for everyone is a belief in god." It appears to be the hall-mark of respectability in this country. Any god, mark you, is better than none at all. An officer on foreign service once sent a bronze deity to George Holyoake, with a note explaining that he had heard that Holyoake was an Atheist, and that he ought to be at least as well provided as his neighbours. Holyoake was quite equal to the occasion, and promptly replied that he was glad of the gift, but the man next door believed in the Trinity, so he still wanted two more to make things equal.

Religion is a trade, just the same as selling sausages. The Christian is enrolled by baptism, declares the Bishop of Gloucester. His marriage is blessed by the Church, and when he shuffles off this mortal coil the priest lays him in the grave. These acts are not spontaneous acts of kindness. Baptism costs so much; marriage is according to scale, choir and organ being extras; and the final scene also depends on the social position of the deceased. The Roman Catholic priests are better business men than their Protestant rivals, for they manage to work in a few post-mortem extras, such as prayers for the dead, and candles. They are not greedy, but they resemble the lodging-house landladies who charge for a meal, and also charge for the use of the cruet.

Having been taxed for these privileges, the unfortunate Christian worshipper is also expected "to give of his means." He does so bravely, and it has even been suggested that the threepenny bit was minted for his especial benefit. Who gives the "coppers" and the brace buttons is not known, but Scotsmen and schoolboys are both under suspicion.

"Fighting Satan" is a most costly business, not only to the individual, but also to the nation. The Black Army of priests numbers forty thousand in this country alone. Think, for a moment, what number of priests all Europe supports. They have been engaged in this sham fight for twenty centuries, and they have never won a victory so far. They have told their tale to many generations of men, and always it has been a false tale. In their solemn jargon they have done nothing to help and much to hinder a troubled world. It is certain that no illumination has come to them at their studies. There is no reason why we should honour any one of them above the soothsayer who sells us an almanac with a pennyworth of the voice of the stars in it.

"The theology taught fifty to a hundred years ago in all our churches leaves people cold," says the Bishop. But present-day theology, however liberal it may be, has not yet reached the level of Free-thought, nor can it ever do so until it ceases to be theology and becomes simple Secularism. For any

purpose connected with the real welfare of the people of this country, the Christian Religion might as well be dead and buried as it will be when the people are sufficiently educated to see the truth that priests are swindling them of their intellectual birth-right.

MIMNERMUS.

Leo Tolstoy.

(Continued from page 500.)

TOLSTOY had, of course, been brought up in the Christian faith. He himself tells us: "I was baptized and brought up in the Orthodox Christian faith. I was taught it in childhood, and all through my boyhood and youth. But before I left the University in my second year, at the age of eighteen, I no longer believed anything I had been taught."⁴ At the age of fifteen he began to read philosophical works, and at the age of sixteen he ceased going to Church and the practice of fasting. But, even as a child, he never seems to have been much under the influence of religion. In his *Confession* he relates the following amusing incident:—

I remember how, when I was about eleven, a boy, Vladimir Milutin (long since dead), a Grammar School pupil, visited us one Sunday, and announced as the latest novelty a discovery made at his school. The discovery was that there is no God, and all that we are taught about Him is a mere invention. I remember how interested my elder brothers were in this news. They called me to their council, and we all, I remember became animated, and accepted the news as something very interesting and fully possible.⁵

However, in spite of his statement that he had lost all religious belief at the University, he was never an Atheist, or lost all belief in a future life. As his biographer observes, his Diary shows that he prayed frequently and earnestly. He discarded the religion of the Orthodox Russo-Greek Church, but in times of trouble he appealed to God. At the age of twenty-five, we find him recording in his Diary:—

I am unable to prove to myself the existence of God, or to find any satisfactory evidence of it, and do not think the conception absolutely necessary. It is easier and simpler to imagine the eternal existence of the universe with its inconceivably admirable order than to imagine the existence of a creator of it . . . I do not understand the necessity for God's existence, but I believe in Him and pray for help to understand Him.⁶

Tolstoy, says Stefan Zweig: "discovered God as an afterthought, because life needs God; just as Kant puts God into the cosmos as an afterthought, for reasons of State."⁷ He discarded the God of the Bible, and he did not believe in a personal god either. Further on he remarks, concerning a future life: "Absence of body, of passions, feelings, recollections, and time (that is of eternity), is it not the absence of all life? What delight is there in a future life if it is impossible to imagine it to oneself?" But he never gave up the belief in it.

When Tolstoy reached the crisis of his climacteric, in his disillusion and disgust with life, he looked round for some philosophy, or religion, to solace and support him in his mental agony: "At once, with berserker rage, says Zweig, he "begins to read helter-skelter the writings of the philosophers of all ages, gulping their words far too rapidly to digest their meaning. He begins with Schopenhauer."⁸

⁴ Aylmer Maude: *Life of Tolstoy* (1908). p. 38.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 24.

⁶ *Private Diary of Leo Tolstoy* (1927). p. 15.

⁷ Zweig: *Adepts in Self-Portraiture* (1929). p. 254.

⁸ *Ibid.* p. 285.

Now although Schopenhauer was an outspoken Atheist, and a vigorous critic of Christianity, yet he found what he regarded as a merit in it, that it was an essentially pessimistic religion. He observes: "It is far more correct to regard work, privation, misery, and suffering crowned by death, as the end of our life (as Brahmanism and Buddhism and also genuine Christianity do); for it is these which lead to the denial of the will to live. In the New Testament the world is represented as a valley of tears, life as a process of purifying or refining, and the symbol of Christianity is an instrument of torture."⁹ Schopenhauer had studied widely and deeply, in these Eastern religions, and was very favourably impressed with the doctrine of *Nirvana*, in which, after death our personal conscience existence is lost and absorbed, as a drop of water is absorbed in the ocean, the extinction of all striving, and personal desires and passions by the loss of our personal identity. In the state of disillusion and disgust at which Tolstoy had now arrived, this idea of *Nirvana* greatly appealed to him. As Janko Lavrin observes:—

As Tolstoy further explains, he summoned all the resources that philosophy, science and the Church could offer him, but none of them proved sufficient. The grin of death seemed so menacing to his self that ultimately he tried to get rid of his individual self . . . He wished to dissolve in the "aggregate of individualities" in the same fashion as a Buddhist dissolves in *Nirvana*. In a sense he found in it a successful substitute for *Nirvana* itself, of which by the way, he had considerable theoretical knowledge. It was particularly in the summer, 1869, that he studied with extreme enthusiasm all the works of Schopenhauer, and even contemplated translating them. He did not hesitate to proclaim him, in a letter to Fet (August 30, 1869), as the greatest of all geniuses . . . Indeed, a foretaste of Tolstoy's enthusiasm for Schopenhauer and *Nirvana* shows itself as early as in Prince Andrew's soliloquy on the battle-field Austerlitz . . . It was not for nothing that he relished Schopenhauer. "In *Nirvana* there is nothing to laugh at; still less is there cause for anger," he wrote to Fet in 1872. "We all (I, at least) feel that it is much more interesting than life; but I agree that however much I may think about it, I can think of nothing else than that *Nirvana* is nothingness. I only stand up for one thing: religious reverence—awe of that *Nirvana*. There is at any time nothing more important than it."

Tolstoy's life after his so-called conversion was, in effect, mainly a "religious reverence" and worship of *Nirvana* in various forms . . . It is in this impulse that he tries to find a radical alleviation of his personal pain of existence, and the ultimate refuge from his fear of death.¹⁰

It was for its social and moral teachings that Tolstoy accepted Christianity, and not for its religious doctrines. To him it had no higher intrinsic authority than Buddhism or Brahmaism. Christ himself he regarded as one of the world's teachers, on a level with Buddha and Confucius. He did not believe in the Virgin Birth, or any other of the New Testament miracles. At one period, says his friend and biographer, Aylmer Maude: "Tolstoy regarded the teaching of Jesus as unique, and far above all other wisdom . . . This opinion of his about Jesus changed very slowly and gradually, in a way not clearly indicated in his works, but of which he has told me in conversation. Chiefly by becoming better acquainted with the Eastern Scriptures (especially those of India and China) he ultimately reached the conclusion that what is vital lies at the root of all

great religions, which are separated and divided by superstitious accretions."¹¹ And he came to attach "less and less importance to Christ's personality and to the exact phraseology and actual words of the Gospels." And he welcomes, in a letter to Birukóf, written about the year 1900, the publication of a book which sought to prove that Christ never existed, upon the grounds that the moral teachings flow, not from any one source: "but from the whole spiritual life of humanity." Many people think that because Tolstoy held by the literal injunctions of Jesus, not to resist evil, and give all to the poor, that Tolstoy was a Fundamentalist. This was not the case. Fundamentalists, and most Christians, believe that Christ was the son of God, but emphatically decline to put his teachings into practice, while Tolstoy, who did not believe anything of the kind, tried to live up to them and made them his guide of life.

W. MANN.

(To be continued.)

A Light that Failed and Another Light that Dawns.

BEFORE me as I write lie thirteen remarkable letters, written by a remarkable woman, and making claims of a most serious and remarkable character. These thirteen letters were sent to me in the year 1883, and each one is written in the handwriting of the sender and signed by her, one Mary Ann Girling, who paraded England and Wales for over twenty years with a band of dancing—singing and shivering Shakers, and was known as the Mother of the Shakers.

The subject matter of these letters and the manner of their coming to me should prove interesting to all readers of rare and curious off-side history.

About fifty years ago, while the present writer was living in the City of Bristol, in the West of England, the hoardings were covered with announcements that the world would soon come to an end, but that all might be saved if they would but attend the meetings to be addressed by this remarkable woman, Mrs. Mary Ann Girling. The meetings were held in the larger Colston Hall, and the present writer attended three of them. There were present about 3,000 people who, like myself, had been drawn mostly out of curiosity.

Mrs. Girling came on to the platform accompanied by her followers, numbering some thirty persons of all ages, but mostly women. Mrs. Girling was a portly, but comely woman of some forty-five years—pleasant, homely, motherly face, but somewhat burdened down with the weight of her mission.

The meetings started with the singing of a hymn of the ordinary type, and was accompanied by the tones of a harmonium played by a tall, thin, black haired, blue-eyed earnest young man of about twenty-five years of age. He had a strong but very tuneful voice and led the singing very effectively. After the first hymn, Mrs. Girling offered up a long and serious prayer. Another hymn and a portion of Scripture from our common Bible. More singing and then a long address by the Leader and Mother of the Shakers, Mrs. Girling. In this sermon, she made it quite plain who she was, and what was the nature of her mission. The grand old world that we had such trust in was speedily to come to an end by the return of the once despised Jesus. But none of us need despair for the Almighty God had commissioned her to stand as

⁹ Schopenhauer: *The World as Will and Idea*. Vol. 3, p. 397.

¹⁰ Janko Lavrin: *Tolstoy: A Psycho-Critical Study* (1924). pp. 102-105.

¹¹ Maude: *Life of Tolstoy. Later Years* (1911). p. 54.

the second Messiah, and that all the world could be saved through her—but through her only, and this was the only chance that was to be vouchsafed—there was no time to be lost, God in his glory and his holy angels might come at any moment. She pointed out that the times of ignorance God had winked at, but now he had commanded all men to repent and believe. She had been appointed by special instruction by God himself to deliver this terrible, yet hopeful message, and it would be the last before the general break-up of the grand old wicked world. Another hymn, a collection taken up, and then during the singing of several more hymns there followed some most dramatic and stirring scenes.

Three or four of the members of this strange sect came forward to the front of the stage, and in a loud voice began to talk in strange languages—which none present could gather the sense or meaning of. Mrs. Girling announced that it was the gift of Tongues, and would be necessary in those days when all the world should gather to her mission to be saved. Then further sensation followed by several of the other women suddenly starting up dancing, yelling, screeching and whirling round like spinning tops, and the whole scene became one mad, wild, uncontrollable mass of confusion.

They continued to shimmer-shake, dance, yell and spin, until they became exhausted and fell prostrate on the platform, foaming, sweating and panting for breath.

After awhile, by the application of sips of cold water from glasses, they one and all gradually came back to the normal and the meeting closed.

The same thing occurred on the other two occasions of my visit. After this I never saw them again, but merely heard of them from time to time through the newspapers.

At last they had a rather nasty jar, one of their members had fallen ill, and the parent responsible neglected or refused to call in a doctor, and the child sickened and died.

Having obtained their address I wrote to the leader, Mrs. Girling, telling her of my earlier experiences with her Mission in the City of Bristol, many years before, and expressed my regrets at their mishap. Then followed these thirteen letters that now lie on my desk.

In answer to my request that she should confide in me the whole story of her life, and the details of her mission and its inception, she kindly answered consenting to do so.

It is an extraordinary story. I will let her speak for herself, save for the mistakes in grammar, atrocious handwriting and errors of spelling—of which I will give only one sample. In referring to the Almighty Father she spells the word with a small f, and thus—fATHER—strange to say that this mistake occurs thirteen times throughout these thirteen letters.

Otherwise her story is plain and straightforward. She writes: "One morning, as I was just about to go downstairs on my ordinary weekly washing, suddenly the bedroom filled with a glowing light, and I heard a voice calling my name—I turned to see who it was that spoke, and behold it was God himself who stood before me in his own person. He pointed out to me that I had all the marks of the crucifixion on my body, as a sign that I was to represent the female part of God on this earth—as Jesus was the male part of God I was the female part. He was brighter than the sun at noon, and he called me daughter, and gave me power to receive all the world through to salvation as the second Messiah on Earth. I found myself enveloped in the glory from which the voice came, and instantly I was changed and my whole being became part of the living God.

I ventured to write her and suggest that any doctor would have readily explained to her the cause of the marks on her body which she had had from birth. He would also have easily convinced her how simple it was to obsess one's mind with an idea till it was possible to have a vision such as she had related to me in her letters. I put it to her kindly, that the whole thing was preposterous and foolish, and did she not think it would be much better for her to be at home in the bosom of her family in the comforts of household duties—rather than be living in that crude and haphazard style in which she now found herself?

To which she replied:

"I have told you the truth about myself, and God's appearances to me—it was no dream or vision, but a real presence—I had two lovely children by my lawful husband—a girl and a boy. These children became bathed in my love, for I knew not how to contain the power of it within me. I have my son with me now, he is twenty-seven years old now—and I am the wife of no man since God's visit to me. On his second visit to me, God told me to leave all and go where he sent me. This was a hard task, for I loved my husband and my children—but I decided to give up all—and God told me that he would come to judge the whole world in my day. At his third visit to me, he assured me that all the world could be saved through me as the female part of God, as I was not only mother to all, but daughter and wife to himself. He had prepared my body by nature to show the world that I was the woman side of God—His real self on earth—Thus Jesus Christ was the father and mother humanly and divinely—and that I was therefore wife to Jesus and to God and to no other—My lawful husband I have not seen for many years, and if I saw him he would be just one of my children in the spiritual manner. Christ will appear soon among us and fill the earth full of light—peace—joy and happiness. If I am thought to be mad and laughed at, that does not alter the truth, which I have fully explained to you, please excuse the wrong spellings. A clergyman from the English Church has called this very morning to examine for himself the marks on my body, to witness if I tell the truth. I enclose to you the only tract I have ever written—I wrote it with my own hand, and it is the truth about the things that are to come."

This pamphlet is called:—

THE CLOSE OF THE DISPENSATION—THE LAST MESSAGE TO THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD.

CHILDREN HEAR THE VOICE OF YOUR MOTHER.

It goes on to state:—

It pleased the Lord God called Jesus Christ the Father supreme to take the body of a woman, by name, Mary Ann Girling, and put the marks of the crucifixion on her body. The same marks that went up to heaven, and those marks came down from the celestial life even into her body, thus proving that it is the same body and life of Jesus. Now the God-mother and Saviour from the Lord God out of heaven.

The beginning of creation was a male—the end is a female—not to be crucified but to be glorified. I now close this letter with the true and loving declaration that I am the second appearing of Jesus—the Christ of God—the Bride the Lamb's wife—the Godmother and the Saviour life from heaven, and that there will not be another.

I write this for the love I have and bear to the whole human family.

(Signed) JESUS CHRIST.
FIRST AND LAST
MARY ANN GIRLING.

Tiptoe, Hordle,
near Lymington,
1883.

After more than twenty years of preaching of the above doctrines, accompanied by singing, dancing, shaking-shimmering, etc., the world continued on its even way—laughed, sneered and despised this poor creature and her followers. Her story did not take on—it failed to catch the popular favour. Collections fell off—funds got low—and the poor little company became discouraged and disheartened. Sickness brought on by hunger and privations and lack of comfort beset them. They ceased to go out to the world and waited its coming to them.

The world failed to come. They settled down in the corner of a park kindly lent them by the Hon. Algernon Herbert, M.P. And then, like a punctured ship, they sank down gradually to be swallowed up in the great sea of the mistaken and misunderstood.

Mrs. Girling's last letter to me reveals a sad state of suffering and want. After a silence of many months, there came a letter from one of her faithful followers named Osborne. In this letter he tells me of Mrs. Girling's death—but he assures me that they did not despair, for she had distinctly assured them all that she would soon come back, and that they were to patiently await her reappearance, for it was not far off.

They waited on, but she came not from the grave wherein they had silently bestowed her.

I dare say that all of them have been gathered into that wonderful silence that awaits us all.

Poor mistaken Mary Ann Girling. Misreading the simple marks on her body as of such momentous import. Thus she passed into the vast limbo of the forgotten and despised Messiahs.

But the crop of would-be Messiahs fails not, which makes it seem that one half the world is busy trying to set the other half right.

While Mary Ann Girling lay a dying in 1884, there came into great prominence another female, who was destined to repeat the self-same mission of the Messiah-producing business. This lady, Mrs. Annie Besant, had parted from her husband, the Rev. Frank Besant, brother of the late Sir Walter Besant, and had to give up her two darling children. But not because of a call from God—for she had written *The Gospel of Atheism, My Path to Atheism*, and Part II of *The Freethinker's Text Book*.

Also she had dared to publish, in partnership with the late Charles Bradlaugh, M.P., the then most terrible book: Dr. Knowlton's *Fruits of Philosophy*.

This last *crime* was the last straw that broke the back of her husband's patience and he sued in the High Courts for the whole charge of the two children as he argued that Mrs. Besant was an unfit person to have charge even of her own children.

The Master of the Rolls upheld that suit and granted Mr. Besant his request.

Then began one of the bitterest struggles conceivable.

Dr. Maric Stopes is too young to know or realize the terror of those days, though her case was hard enough.

Mrs. Besant's children were taken from her, and the world stood in two camps of sympathy and hate.

But we stood by the side of Mrs. Besant and rejoiced at each powerful and stinging tirade she issued against the robbers of her mother's rights especially the open letter she wrote to Lord Justice Jessop, the Master of the Rolls at that time.

Little did we think in our rejoicings and applause that we should ever live to witness what we have in the life of Mrs. Besant. Imagine this once grief-stricken, sorrowing mother living to enact the same process by stealing two children from their parents. And actually carrying her claims to a High Court in

India, and winning the case as her husband had won against her.

Oh! The irony of Fate! In her case it was a parent who won and regained his own children—but in this second case it is a stranger, namely Mrs. Annie Besant, who succeeds in winning the children of others from the rightful possession of their parents.

For what purpose? To make one of them into a brand new up-to-date Messiah! She was to decide which of the two should be the right one by watching their conduct and capacity.

But her pride was pricked, for Buddha called one of them home to Nirvana, and the left one thus became the right one.

So, under the special stage management of Mrs. Annie Besant, the once weeping mother, this new Messiah is to have a good start in the *shape* of a ready-made and orthodox set of twelve apostles, and these same are to be theatrically arranged in a perfect circle of golden houses with the real live ready-made Messiah planted in a golden house thickly studded with precious stones in the very centre of the sacred circle.

Mrs. Annie Besant has managed to get into the magic ring of the twelve apostles, and she has cunningly chosen the wilds of Scotland for the calm habitation of this lucky gang of merchants in wisdom and philosophy from the misty East.

One wonders if this new discoverer of new Messiahs ever felt any twitch of conscience spring up within her from the bitter memory of those days of terrible agony when she had her own darlings torn from her by the cruel law. Some of us vividly remember the weeping-voiced Mrs. Besant and the tearful multitudes that hung on her scorching eloquence of those stirring days.

But the River of the mighty Limbo is deep and wide, and it is perhaps merely a matter of time for even some of us to witness the going down to this new Light of Asia among the other foolish lights of the world, and the ages that have had their short flickering shine, and have at last snuffed out into the darkness of Hades. Oh! this wonderful crop of easy promising reformers! Great is the crowd thereof.

Oh! wonderful good-tempered old world to stand them all as they appear with such wonderful patience.

These Lights that fail!

EUREKA.

DISESTABLISHMENT AND DISESTABLISHMENT.

I had many provincial prejudices to get rid of after settling in England. It appeared at first the plainest duty in the world to unite with the dissenters in their agitation for the Separation of Church and State. After a year or so, I began to wonder at never seeing at their meetings any of the great liberal thinkers, none of the scientific men . . . I revised the whole matter carefully, and reached the conclusion that I had been cheated by the phrase, "Separation of Church and State." No genuine separation of that kind has ever taken place. In America, the separation of Church and State has invariably meant merely the separation of the State from one particular Church—the English Church—to the extent only of establishing all sects along with it. By the exemption of Church property from taxation the whole community is taxed in the interest of those churches. Then by the legal establishment of the aggregate Sabbatarianism of the churches, by appointing and paying national chaplains, by supporting in treaties and by military force the propaganda of missionaries, orthodox Christianity is made a national American institution. Sectarian churches are, indeed, all enjoying established privileges in America unknown to the English Church.

M. D. Conway, "Autobiography," vol. ii., p. 291.

Acid Drops.

It seems that where religion is concerned, papers and journals that are not specially devoted to its advocacy, put on one side all common sense. Thus, in a recent issue of *John Bull* there appears a letter from "J. T. Ilford," telling a yarn of some young speaker in Victoria Park, "a few years ago," who was "An Atheist propagandist of the most virulent type." But when visiting "a small suburban chapel," great was J. T.'s surprise to find this particular pulpit occupied by the Victoria Park Atheist, and to learn that he had preached in this chapel for several years. We advise the editor of *John Bull* to inquire who the remarkable Atheist-Christian was, and where the chapel is situated. He might also reflect that there really is a limit to the nonsense people can swallow—even in the name of religion.

The Dean of Windsor told some school-teachers that "there is no profession which is more liable than the teaching profession to be intellectually cocksure." We know of another profession much more liable to be cocksure. And we presume that it was the Dean's natural modesty which prevented him from naming his own as the champion cocksure profession of all. A profession whose members believe and teach that they are in God's confidence, and that God has appointed them as guides to ordinary mortals, couldn't help but be more cocksure than any other. There's no harm in adding that one of the useful jobs done by the *Freethinker* is to destroy people's stupid belief in the cocksure claims of priests. In so doing we may, of course, get ourselves accused of intolerance and of using abuse and misrepresentation. That cannot be helped. There always are persons who fail to understand what we are aiming to achieve. 'Twas ever thus!

In our issue for June 30, we quoted some remarks on denominational religious teaching in schools from the pen of "The Dominic," of the *Teachers' World*. Since then "The Dominic" has been criticized by a Roman Catholic teacher, to whom "The Dominic" replies as follows:—

DENOMINATIONAL HISTORY.

It is abundantly clear that Mr. Wm. J. MacDonald and I must agree to differ concerning the claim of religious bodies to have their portion of rates and taxes allocated to their special purposes. Such a claim seems to me to destroy all civic and national enterprise. Carried to its logical end, it would mean that no pacifist would be required to pay income-tax towards defence, and that every ratepayer who felt a conscientious objection regarding sanitation would be entitled to have his water-rate refunded. Leaving aside these considerations, I note with interest that Mr. MacDonald says that it is not only for special religious teaching that he wants denominational schools. "There is," he says, "the history lesson. There are a thousand and one things that pop up continually." Are we to understand that there is a special form of historical belief essential to certain denominations? I thought that a conscientious historian would seek the facts and avoid twisting them to serve any extraneous purpose. Perhaps I am wrong. I may be unfortunate, but I have never met an Anglican decimal fraction in arithmetic or Congregational contour line in geography. Quite recently a Dean declared that "teachers have to learn to be respectful towards the minds of their pupils."

The *Daily News* is responsible for the statement that the present Bishop of London has "a well-known antiquarian in Samuel Pepys, or, conversely Pepys had a distinguished descendant in Dr. Ingram." If the information be correct we should very much like to have Pepys's reflections on his descendant. Some of his diary was so very 'naughty' as to prevent literal translation. Pepys on Dr. Winnington Ingram would have to be read behind closed doors.

Professor Crew, of Edinburgh University, thinks that one day science will have advanced so far as to make it possible for us to live for ever on earth. We sincerely hope not. The prospect of *everybody* living for ever is one degree more horrible than *anyone* living for ever. And if that occurs, what will become of the "Summerland" of the Spiritualist, and the heaven of the ordinary religionist? It will be left untenanted, harps and halos will be offered at celestial jumble sales, with no one to purchase them save heavenly antiquaries, who were transported to heaven before people knew enough to remain perpetually on earth.

A representative of the *Schoolmistress* has been touring Germany, and the following is the result:—

... a brief survey of German education would be incomplete without reference to the definite signs of a religious revival in Germany, particularly in the South. Every village has its well-kept church, and in the journey from Munich to Cologne I was struck by the comparatively large number of churches being built. Religion is taught in the schools, some States allowing "right of entry," and the various denominations are housed under the same roof. It is evident that the German mind, conscious of the recent national chastening, is searching deep down for the realities and true meaning of life.

We seem to remember Pfarrer Martin Maczyrski, a minister of the former State Church in Germany, declaring last June that religious instruction is not now compulsory in all day schools, and that a large number are now secularized, and provide merely a course of general moral teaching. He regretted the fact that the whole task of imparting the facts concerning the Christian religion is falling to the Church. We wonder who has the truth of the matter? As to the alleged revival of religion in Germany, we daresay we shall not have to wait long before hearing some German pastor over here deplore the fact that it is as hard a job to get people interested in religion in Germany as it is in England.

A weekly journal says:—

When William Morris set up his workshop for making beautiful the common things of everyday life, he did as great a service to our homes as the doctors who flooded stuffy Victorian rooms with fresh air; for the artist-poet opened the tightly-shut windows of people's minds, and let in the spiritual fresh air of beauty.

Unfortunately, the cultural efforts of Morris influenced but a very limited number of the common people. The evil effects of the Evangelical Revival were still operative. Puritanical minds—religion filled but culture barren—were too tightly sealed for the fresh air of beauty to penetrate therein. Now, if only Morris had been born in this present age of irreligion—what a welcome he would have had from multitudes of the anathematized neo-pagans!

Skegness donkeys are not to work on Sundays. There is no sound reason why they should not rest on a weekday, instead of on Sunday, when the largest number of people are taking a holiday from the week's toil. But the donkeys are to rest on Sunday, because the pious desire to hinder Sunday pleasure. It reminds us of the reason Macaulay gave to account for the Puritan opposition to bear-baiting.

Mr. S. Courtauld has given £10,000 to the Playing Fields Association. Someone has left £25,000 to Bart.'s Hospital in memory of a friend killed in the war. A few centuries ago, some artful priest would have diverted this kind of gift into the coffers of his Church. In those days the money would probably have been used merely to erect an edifice for God to roost in, and have benefited nobody. To-day, it can benefit the nation. As religion ceases to colour the whole of men's lives, the charitable think of more useful ways to benefit their fellows.

A weekly paper explains to a reader what "Toc H" is:—

An association, that originated during the Great War, of young men pledged to help one another and study social conditions. Toc II promotes clubs and hostels.

This is not quite correct. Toc H is an association, originated by an Anglican priest, for exploiting the natural instincts of young men—the charitable, the kindly, and the social instincts—to the advantage of religion and the Church.

The Bishop of Sheffield has just noticed something that was apparent to ordinary folk long ago. Says he, "the world to-day is a better place than it has ever been before." Then, for the world's sake, don't let anybody revive religion. The world has been getting steadily better while religion has been progressively losing its hold on the world.

Mr. W. Hughes Jones says: "One way to save the Sunday school is for the Sunday school to become a home of culture." What a shocking revolutionary suggestion! Still, necessity is the mother of invention, and desperate needs call for desperate remedies. But need Mr. Jones have advertised that Sunday schools entirely lack culture?

Dagenham Urban Council has voted in favour of Sunday games in Valence Park. There were only two votes against. 'Tis by these means we wretched mortals stoke up the "wrath to come"!

Dr. C. C. Douglas told the British Association, at Manchester, that 90 per cent of the disclosures made in the confessional had to do with sexual subjects. A contemporary inquires how the Doctor can know that, since priests do not betray what is told them in the confession box. Our contemporary might bear in mind that there are many ex-priests who would quite willingly give such simple information. And no doubt many of the priest's clients volunteer the information to their doctors as to having told the priest.

A publisher suggests metal covers for books. We don't suppose they will be needed for the Bible in average households. It doesn't get much wear and tear in these unbelieving days. Which is a pity, seeing that the Bible—according to Queen Victoria—was the source of Britain's greatness.

A writer in a daily paper declares that this is an age of beauty culture, and that the greatest of all aids to beauty is that people should regard it as an ideal and try to realize it. Once upon a time, he reminds us, beauty was suspect. We may add that the notion of beauty as an ideal to be realized in every direction was essentially a pagan one. But it was very effectively blotted out through the unlovely influence of the Christian religion. What is significant is that the ideal has been revived in this neo-pagan era, which the parsons so scathingly condemn. It should interest philosophers to note how noble pagan ideals appeal to people, so soon as their minds shake themselves free from Christian influence. This being the case, perhaps there is no need to worry about "what will you put in the place of religion?"

The soul is dyed with the colour of its leisure thoughts, declares Mr. Bruce Lockhart. And the moral we append is—never let your leisure thoughts get dyed with the "Blood of the Lamb."

According to Professor P. S. Lclean:—

Boys are influenced best by their mothers until the age of seven; by their fathers from eight to eleven; by other boys from twelve to seventeen; and by girls from eighteen until full maturity.

Girls are best influenced by their mothers until the age of ten; by girl companions from eleven to fifteen; by their fathers from sixteen to seventeen; and by boys from seventeen onwards.

There seems to be no room for the priest in this picture. But, perhaps it is wise to leave him out, when one is discussing what influences are best for children.

Cardinal Bourne says that when he was asked to sanction the Scout Movement, his chief concern was to safeguard the religious interests of Roman Catholics. He was assured that no interference whatever would be permitted with the religious opinions of the boys, and the promise has been kept. Such troubles, as had been reported to him, were soon remedied on complaint being made. We have reason to question the truth of the statement, but it is, perhaps, worth noting that the one thing that cannot bring the youth of the world into harmonious co-operation is religion. Even assuming that these boys could be taught together as Catholics, and as members of the different Protestant sects, the Jamboree would soon become a Domybrook. They cannot unite, live together, and play together on the grounds of purely social virtues. But religion must not be allowed to interfere. And when religion does raise its head they are at once divided into separate camps, each with its own particular medicine-man, who is probably wishing the other fellow in hell—even if he is not openly sending him there. And these same medicine-men have the impudence to assure us that life is impossible without religion!

A Londoner, calling himself Professor Amrak has just been fined forty pounds for fortune telling. Professor Amrak lacks caution. In the first place he made the mistake of telling people their fortunes in this world. And there is here a risk of being found out. Next, he called himself a mere "prophetic medium," and that was just silly. He should have founded something in the nature of a religion, and talked grandiloquently about the higher spiritual life, and man's immortal destiny. Had he done this the law instead of prosecuting him would have defended him, and money would have flowed in much more rapidly. It puzzles us why men should risk imprisonment as fortune-tellers, when they can so easily and so profitably exploit ignorance and credulity in the name of religion. If ever we compiled, *A Trickster's Guide to Fortune*, we should give a very large section under the head of religion.

The Rev. Frank Chambers considers that Southend on a Saturday is as near hell as he cares to get. He has seen people drunk there, and on one occasion, when he dressed himself in ordinary clothes, the better to observe, he saw a woman standing in the square with her clothes up, so that "little was left to the imagination"—Mr. Chamber's imagination. We are not surprised, the imagination of many of our clerics is very active where such things are concerned. After all, we daresay Southenders will not be very much upset about Mr. Chamber's charges. They may reflect, that in these days a poor parson must do something to fill his church.

"Yet life," you say, "is life; we have seen and seen
And with a living pleasure we describe;
And fits of sprightly malice do but bribe
The languid mind into activity,
Sound sense, and love itself, and mirth and glee
Are fostered by the comment and the gibe."
Even be it so, yet still among your tribe,
Our daily world's true Worldlings, rank not one!
Children are blest, and powerful; their world lies
More justly balanced; partly at their feet
And part far from them—sweetest melodies
Are those that are by distance made more sweet;
Whose mind is but the mind of their own eyes,
He is a Slave; the meanest we can meet.

Wordsworth.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

THOSE SUBSCRIBERS WHO RECEIVE THEIR COPY OF THE "FREETHINKER" IN A GREEN WRAPPER WILL PLEASE TAKE IT THAT A RENEWAL OF THEIR SUBSCRIPTION IS DUE. THEY WILL ALSO OBLIGE, IF THEY DO NOT WANT US TO CONTINUE SENDING THE PAPER, BY NOTIFYING US TO THAT EFFECT.

FREETHINKER ENDOWMENT FUND.—S. G. Green, £1.

J. TULLEN.—Sorry your letter cannot appear in this issue. Will appear next week.

J. BRIGHTON.—Very pleased to hear of the successful meetings held by yourself and Mr. Keast at Stanley and Spennymoor.

J. HUTCHINSON.—Yes, the fallacy is very, very obvious. Until men manage to discuss other matters they will never get the truth of the subject. Until they do so they are under the sway of the superstition they profess to examine impartially.

TOWARDS ADVERTISING THE "FREETHINKER."—"Skipper," £1.

F. S. HOUGHTON.—Pleased to hear of the useful and large meetings Mr. Brighton has been holding at Spennymoor, Stanley, and elsewhere.

A. B. MOSS.—Glad to hear you are keeping well. Thanks for good wishes, but we manage to shake the net well during the few days we were away, and as we had, as usual to take work with us, "holiday" became a rather farcical term.

E. G. BAYFORD.—Another proof that (1) where Christianity is concerned nothing is too silly for publication; (2) that editors in publishing such things have a lively sense of the stupidity of the religious mind.

R. DODD.—You will see we have been compelled to reject a number of letter on the Agnostic-Atheist question, as so many of the writers travelled over the same ground. We regret the necessity as your own letter was an exceedingly good one.

C. BEADNELL.—Next week.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sugar Plums.

Mr. Chapman Cohen has had a few days holiday, although the weather has been none too kind, and a certain amount of work had to be taken with him. But it is only when getting back that he realizes the

immense number of odds and ends that take up his time. The accumulation of about ten days correspondence that need attention is so great that he must again ask the indulgence of his correspondents. These are being dealt with in the order of their importance. Meanwhile all must have patience.

We have received from the Stratford Press, Boston, U.S.A., *The Story of the Religious Controversy*, by Joseph McCabe, price five dollars. The work is a handsome volume of over 600 pages, and is chiefly made up of reprints of the small works which Mr. McCabe contributed to Haldeman-Julius' Little Blue Books. The book is divided into thirty-three chapters, dealing with the origin of religion, morals, woman, slavery, medieval art and the Church, phallic elements in religion, etc., etc. Mr. Haldeman-Julius wrote a very enthusiastic introduction, and it is therefore not fair to hold the author responsible for the statement that this is the complete survey of all religious controversy, and that there is here the "last word of rationalism." It is hard to say what is the last word on any subject, particularly on a live and growing subject such as Freethought, and there are very many Freethinkers who would strongly dispute Mr. McCabe's belief in the historicity of Jesus. Not even 600 pages can do that, and there are many other fields to be dealt with before the field is even covered. But our friends on the other side of the Atlantic are accustomed to sky-scrapers, and that must not hide the fact that Mr. McCabe's work will be found very useful indeed to anyone who requires a bird's eye view of one of the oldest and the greatest controversies in human history. We cannot conceive any candid person of average intelligence reading this volume, without having some very strong doubts as to the truth of the stories that are being told week after week, and year after year by many thousands of priests all over the world.

We fell into an error in announcing that the price of Mr. John M. Robertson's *History of Freethought in the Nineteenth Century* as 18s. The price is 24s.

We have received very many letters replying to Mr. Boyd Freeman's essay on Atheism and Agnosticism, but as nearly all dwell upon the same point, we are obliged to decline most of them, and it is useless publishing a series of letters, each going over substantially the same ground. Those published may be taken as representative of the rest. We agree with our correspondents that Mr. Boyd Freeman has much to learn concerning Atheism, and we would add, of Agnosticism also. Atheism really is something more than a "There-aunt-no-gawd" kind of philosophy. The connexion of "Agnostic" with the belief in God is both fallacious and illegitimate.

Mr. F. P. Corrigan commenced his series of meetings in Finsbury Park and Streatham Common on Sunday last, and we are pleased to hear that he had good audiences at both places. He will continue the meetings, Finsbury Park in the morning, and Streatham Common in the evening, during the rest of the lecturing season. He has to thank Messrs. Prece, Hewer, Seabert, and R. F. Keble, but will be glad of other helpers who care to come forward.

We are again obliged to hold over a number of letters for publication until next week. Once again we impress upon readers the virtue of brevity. A letter should not aspire to be an essay. It is equally bad to expand a note into an essay. Writers should have some little concern for the poor editor. Often he is compelled to choose between abbreviation and exclusion.

The wild curiosity of our nature to grasp at and anticipate future things, as if we had not enough to do to digest the present.—*Montaigne*.

"The Pope is infallible," says the Catholic. "The Bible is infallible," says the Protestant. "Science is our best guide," says the Secularist.

The Story of an Expiring Race.

THE Nomadic Bushmen of South Central Africa are among the most primitive of surviving peoples. Long centuries before the white races settled in South Africa, the Bushman's territories embraced a wide area in the Dark Continent. Southern Africa was then the dwelling place of a multitudinous array of mammalian life. Antelopes, elands, gnus, giraffes, zebras, quaggas, elephants, wild boars and many other quadrupeds on all sides abounded, and these and the ostrich were hunted for food.

In warfare, as in the chase, the natives mainly depended on the use of the bow and arrow. Several kinds of poison were utilized to envenom the arrow's-point. Poisonous plant juices, the venom of snakes, and other deadly toxins were requisitioned; the power of the poison varying with the size and strength of the hunted animal. The poisoned arrows were carried in a quiver provided with a cover as a guard against accidents. The relatively wide-spread Bushmen were quite capable of curing injuries accidentally inflicted, and even possessed antidotes that proved efficacious against the bites of venomous snakes.

Both in attack and defence, the bow and arrow served them well. With these they held their own both against the predatory lion and the intruding Kaffir. Devious and deceptive were the means employed to enable the natives to approach their quarry. With bundles of herbage hiding their heads, they moved so slowly towards their prey that the browsing animals remained innocent of danger. The ostrich and the watchful quagga feed together in the pastures, and the hunter, we are told, disguised himself as an ostrich, "simulated its gait, stopping every now and then to preen his feathers, or to peck and feed, till he found himself mingling with the herd, and could let fly poisoned arrows without exciting suspicion. Although, under these circumstances, he could have made a heavy bag, he never took more than he really wanted, for he was a provident hunter, and killed for food, not for sport. For large game the Bushmen combined together to set traps, digging with great labour carefully concealed pitfalls, or suspending a heavily weighted weapon over the path to the water pools."

The larger game were hunted by the men, while the women captured the smaller creatures, and collected the vegetable provender. All non-perishable plant food was garnered for winter use, and it seems strange that the gathering and storage of seeds of wild plants never led to husbandry. But so it was, and the Bushman continued to be devoid of the art of agriculture remaining a hardy and adventurous hunter to the end.

In seasons of drought, ingenious devices were employed to procure water, the natives even obtaining it from moist sand. Nor were they abstainers from more stimulating liquids. From wild honey they prepared that delightful beverage mead. This drink was extremely pleasing to our unpolished Saxon forefathers, and is still procurable in rustic retreats in Thomas Hardy's Wessex.

The diminutive Bushmen—and they were among the smallest of mankind—were highly sensitive to the appeal of art. Their sculpture and painting were of a very superior order. Even their dress displayed an æsthetic sense. It was certainly scanty, but so is that of many modern Europeans in a much cooler climate. Fur and skin caps served as head-coverings, and light leather shoes were worn by the men when travelling. Beads were made from fragments of ostrich-shell for purposes of adornment, and some villages were celebrated for their manufacture,

Bushman human-nature was similar to that of the European stocks, both in the Old World and the New. For their social functions the Bushmen decorated their bodies most elaborately. The women pomaded and dusted their hair, and beautified their necks and faces with powder. Designs in colour somewhat like those favoured by the aborigines of Australia were fashionable with the Bushman-beau. Bells and rattles were attached to the men's limbs, and served to enliven and time the dance. The women appreciated perfumes, and carried packets of sweet-smelling powder.

Caves and primitive huts were their habitations. The cave was regarded as the permanent dwelling-place. To the caves they invariably returned at the close of their wanderings in search of game, and there they told their tales of adventure to admiring audiences. Stow, who knew the Bushmen well, informs us that the greater caves, several of which served as residences for leading chiefs, were notable for their mural paintings which portrayed the tribal emblems such as the ostrich, eland and other animals. On the other hand, the huts were of simple construction, and could be carried by the hunters on their expeditions.

The Bushmen appear to have made more progress in the art of music than any other South African race. Their various dances were accompanied by vocal and instrumental music. Their several musical instruments included pipes and drums, and a four-stringed harp, which had been developed from the native bow. And not merely was the Bushman an excellent musician and dancer, but he was an actor of ability as well. In his *Ancient Hunters and their Modern Representatives*, Professor Sollas states that: "Many of the dances might well be termed ballets, the performers, dressed to take the part, mimicked the lives and habits of their friends, the animals; thus there was an amusing dance of the baboons, another of the frogs, and a very poetical one of the bees. There was also a general masquerade in which each performer represented a different kind of animal. To another class belonged the hunting dances and those associated with productive rites. One of the latter was a reed and pipe dance, and to judge from the description, the sound of its fluting must have been pleasant to the ears of the great god Pan."

The richness of the folk-fables and traditions of these children of Nature is simply astounding. The anthropologist owes a deep debt of gratitude to Bleek, who preserved so much from oblivion. When published in detailed form, these folk-tales will prove an invaluable addition to our knowledge of primitive psychology.

Unfortunately, little is positively known concerning the religious ideas of the Bushmen. That they feared and worshipped their dead ancestors seems certain. Various reliable observers declare that a powerful divinity was recognized who made the world, provides or refuses the rainfall, and fashions and destroys living things. The Bushmen's faith in the spirit realm of the dead is proved by their funerary ceremonies. The corpse was painted in red, covered with aromatic powder, and laid to rest in a grave with its face turned to the east. The hut of the departed was lowered into the burial-place and burnt to ashes. In some tribes, his staff and bow were placed by his side. The survivors removed their dwelling-place from the vicinity of the grave, partly in order to avoid the ghost, and also to prevent the children crying for the return of the dead.

The most critical observers of the Bushmen, in their native environment, have been considerably impressed by their high intellectual endowment. It is

generally conceded that their ethical standard ranked high, not only in theory, but in practice. The Bushmen were courageous to a fault, and to them freedom was a priceless possession. This spirit of independence appeared in the eyes of the European explorer and settler, as the Bushman's most evil characteristic. In the words of Prof. Sollas, "They found it impossible to become slaves to strange masters in their own land. Equally impossible was it for a hunting race to maintain its existence in proximity to an encroaching agricultural people of European blood. A terrible war of extermination was waged against them by the Boers. The stories that are told of this war are shocking to our humanity; and we cannot refuse a tribute of admiration to these brave people, who, in almost every instance, preferred death to surrender."

This interesting and likeable race is now rapidly drifting to extinction. In the inhospitable Kalahari Desert and its environs, a few miserable survivors remain to remind us of man's inhumanity to man.

It has been urged that the Bushmen were related, to, and perhaps descended from some of the prehistoric people of Europe, whose artistic achievements have come down to us from Aurignacian times. If these ancient artists were the ancestors of the African Bushmen the latter must have traversed the whole length of Africa before reaching the Cape. Many of the best authorities conclude that the Bushmen in early days migrated from the north. Artistic remains discovered in Africa may mark their line of travel while their period of migration from north to south probably embraced several thousand years. It is certainly suggestive that drawings found in French caves, which closely resemble the Bushman's art, date from the Upper Palæolithic Age. In the north of Africa they belong to the later Neolithic, while in the south they are mostly of recent production.

T. F. PALMER.

Religion in Aberdeen.

THOUGH not adverse to publicity, the Aberdeen United Free Church ministers do not desire the kind of publicity given to their utterances by the *Freethinker*.

The Rev. D. C. Mitchell prefaced an address delivered on the Castlegate, on "What is the use of the Church," by an onslaught on the *Freethinker*, which he designated as a journal of negations, which led nowhere.

Does this cultured gentleman, distinguished graduate of a Scottish University, and member of the Labour Party, desire that the thoughts of his "fellow-workers," as he calls them in political circles, should not be free, but fettered; fettered by words uttered by ignorant Orientals, who lived a restricted life in a backward area 3,000 years ago; who consequently were totally ignorant of the natural and social science of to-day; and totally ignorant of our modern social and economic conditions?

Does he think that men who died in the first century, can give out competent opinions, to guide men in the twentieth?

Would he have us use the Bible as a biological text book, or a manual of anthropology?

In these matters I think he will find that the *Freethinker* is more reliable than the New Testament; and that both the Christian minister and the Atheist editor, are dependent on the scientist for information.

Surely the fundamental argument for Freethought is the dubiety of all our beliefs?

Questioned as to Mr. Chapman Cohen's attitude to war, Mr. Mitchell admitted that if he was a pacifist in 1914, when it was not fashionable to be so, he acted in a more Christ-like manner than the Christian churches; but he added, "being an Atheist is all the worse for him."

Why, Mr. Mitchell did not say; but probably he has the old-fashioned idea, still cultivated in religious circles, that an abandonment of orthodox religion, means a moral change, and not merely an intellectual one.

Materialism, Old and New.

(Concluded from page 474.)

II.

HAVING shown that Materialism is faced with a popular boycott, let us next consider the remedy. How is it to recover philosophic prestige?

At the outset let me say I am fully aware of an objection. I hear a voice crying: "What matters philosophic prestige?" My only reply is, that it does matter practically. Metaphysics may be a huge nightmare, but it is established, and must be dealt with. Materialism must leave no field unexploited, just as Atheism, in the same way, has had to set itself to explain the origin of the ideas of God and Soul.

* * *

That a book called *Materialism Re-stated* should be published, was in itself an admission that there was a need for restatement. And that need was occasioned by the disrepute into which Materialism had fallen owing to several factors which have marked the trend of recent philosophy. These are, chiefly: the new teaching of science concerning atoms, and consequently the revision of the atomic theory which coincided historically with the materialist vogue of the last century; the influence of Bergson's metaphysic concerning Duration; the "vanishing" of matter into a "spatio-temporal continuum"; the strenuous efforts made by Teleologists to claim the electronic "jump" in support of their view. There is one development of Realism, however, which is conceivably reconcilable with Materialism, on the ground that it does not matter essentially what matter is. I refer to Bertrand Russell's theory of "neutral particulars." In the main, however, the modern tendency is to discredit Materialism—the popular idea of it, at any rate.

Hence there was never a greater need for a book than for *Materialism Re-stated*. Its only fault was that its name was prejudicial. "Give a dog a bad name . . ."

What happened to the naïve Realism of pre-Cartesian days? It crumbled away in the hands of the metaphysical sophists, with their Representationalism and Subjective and Objective Idealism. When it was revived it had to take labels. And so we have the American School of Critical Realists, and the Neo-Realists.

What is Materialism "re-stated" but "newly-stated" Materialism; in fact, Neo-Materialism?

The revolutionary idea of altering an old term will, I am ready to believe, be most unpalatable to many stolid adherents of Materialism. Their reply will be, "Why should we hesitate to use a term if it covers its meaning adequately? Did not Bradlaugh, when approached on the undesirability of the word 'Atheist,' say that the fact of a word being misunderstood was an additional reason for using it? Let us leave the ground-shifting to the Christians." And so forth.

Yet even as a Materialist myself, I do not endorse the term because it is completely satisfactory, but because it is the least unsatisfactory. The trouble is, that a Materialist is a Singularist, recognising one basic principle at the root of existence. And, like other Singularists, as soon as he gives his principle a name, he is implying something to which that name will not apply. Why should we endeavour to give a name to the eternal substance? If it be eternal and absolute it is unnameable. If we give it a name, we put it into a class, thereby separating it from other classes. But there cannot be any other classes, if we

are to adhere to our postulate. To call it matter is to imply something that is not matter. To categorize it as mind is to separate it from that which is not mental. In either case the idea of one principle is rebuked.

What is it, then, that exists? It is Existence, and needs no other name to describe it. The only other class possible is Non-Existence, Nothing. We call that which exists, then, Existence. And inasmuch as Matter, whatever it might be, is the cardinal fact of existence, the Materialistic hypothesis would seem to be the most serviceable. That is my sole reason for holding it.

But suppose the term should fall into misuse. Remember that it is fallible human beings who often make or alter meanings of words. To the compilers of Dictionaries and Cyclopædias, Materialism means what the majority says it must mean, not what a few would like it to mean. Rightly or wrongly, the term is dated. I am not raising the question as to whether it ought to be dated—that is important to note. I am merely stating the fact that it is dated, in popular parlance. It conjures up the idea of matter existing alone, or with mind as a sort of epiphenomenon. "Like a halo round the head of a saint," and "the brain secretes thought as the liver secretes bile," are two parrot-cries of anti-materialists even to-day.

If we are to lift Materialism out of the disrepute in which it now finds itself, it may be necessary to give it a label. Its opponents are giving it labels of quite a disparaging nature—"crude," "barren," and so forth. To guard against misunderstanding in general I have suggested Neo-Materialism. Far be it from me to insinuate that there has been the much talked-of explosion. Nor am I sanguine that a change of term will immediately bring about a change of public attitude. I merely express the modest hope that the next book on the subject, in order to stand the best chance of reaching the greatest possible number of philosophical students, will have "Neo-Materialism" on its title-page. Further, I affirm with confidence that it is no misnomer. Philosophy readily takes to its heart a new term. Neo-Materialism is no more superfluous than Neo-Realism.

It is a compromise with popular fallacy until such time as Materialism is embraced by Philosophy as well as by Science. Are we prepared to make the compromise? Or are there any more suggestions?

To sum up the foregoing, I append a choice of two alternatives:

"Neo-Materialism" = Materialism re-stated.

"Materialism" = Materialism mis-stated.

G. H. TAYLOR.

Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

ATHEIST OR AGNOSTIC?

SIR,—In answer to Mr. Bayliss, I am of the same opinion as he—namely that the Christian "God" is non-existent. There is nothing in my article inconsistent with this statement. What I did say was (in effect) that a modified Theism could be a theory that would hang together. I also said that many other solutions of the riddle of the universe are possible. In his haste Mr. Bayliss has not gathered the significance of the words "theory," and "many other solutions"—and thereby supplies confirmation of my criticism that Atheists are obsessed by Theists and Theism. Instead of facing the riddle squarely, they will let their attention be distracted by (especially) Christians and their very crude theism.

In answer to Mr. Cutner's questions: 1. No. 2. No. 3. No. The latter answer does away with the need for answering a, b, c, d, and e.

The "Atheist" I refer to is a composite, a generalized personification, a mosaic of impressions (if the simile will pass) gathered as much as anything from the columns and contributors of the *Freethinker*.

On Thursday evening last, an Atheist friend, and myself, and the clock, had an argument on this subject, and a few others. "Argument," however is scarcely the word, and I mention the clock because it chimed in oftener than I did. In fact I never did manage to chime in. Well, hardly ever. We, that is, he, started at 6 p.m., and went on till—Now! till very late. In the later stages I found it necessary to have the backing or support (solid but cold) of Victoria House, and I fancy the passers by (a diminishing number at that time) thought that a bit of Hyde Park—one of those bits by the Marble Arch, where the orators most do congregate—had wandered into Southampton Row, the whilst my friend, having fixed me with his Ancient Marine eye, demonstrated how cocksure he, as an Atheist, was—not. Those last eight words I feel rather proud of. They constitute what they arrive at in trade disputes—a formula (blessed word!) that both sides can subscribe to and mean anything they like!

The name (by the way) of the friend with the A. M. eye was Cutner.

C. R. BOYD FREEMAN.

SIR,—I was keenly interested in Mr. Boyd Freeman's article on the above topic. For clarity and terseness it was certainly one of the best arguments on this problem which I have seen in the *Freethinker*.

But I certainly think he has misjudged the Atheist, when he says, the Atheist declares that he *knows*. So far, I have not met this brand of Atheist. How can he possibly say he *knows*, when the subject of the discussion cannot be defined.

I wonder where these "cocksure" Atheists are to be found. If they exist, Mr. Freeman's strictures would be well deserved; although, for pure "cocksureness" what could beat the Alpha and Omega of his own article? "Agnostic—most decidedly." "The Agnostic, decidedly."

To my mind, Mr. Boyd Freeman has got the wrong definition of the word "Atheist." I understand it to mean "A," without; and Theos—God"; and the Atheist who lives up to the word is the Agnostic minus the top hat.

Apart from this, to me, misunderstanding of the Atheistic position, I will say once more that Mr. Boyd Freeman's article was alive with good sense and sound argument.

JOHN BREESE.

CHURCH AND STATE.

SIR,—I have to thank you for your recent references to the case of Mr. Stevens, who was sent to Bedford prison for contempt of the Ely Ecclesiastical Court. Just twenty-five years ago, that is, at the beginning of 1904, I was in the Ely Diocese, and came across a Chancellor of Ely, or rather, he came across me.

This makes me take a deeper interest still, in this recent case, and makes me doubt the legality of its ecclesiastical decision.

Mr. Stevens, it seems, has paid the demand, legal or not, and, gone to reside in his worry, his ill-health, and old age, under his "vine and fig-tree"; or according to your statement of what the reporter says, he has gone home to "read his beloved Bible."

But such a case should not be allowed to rest with Mr. Stevens alone. It is an important national question, far above the usual tweedle-dees and tweedle-dums of ordinary political and ecclesiastical life.

Who is to be boss—Church or State?

Most people, are alas, indifferent; but it was not always so. The Radicals of my young days, and the Reformers of past times would have had it seen to. Shall we do less than they?

ROBERT ATHERTON.

(formerly clergyman of Ely Diocese.)

AS OTHERS SEE US.

SIR.—There is so much in Mr. Whitham's letter under the above heading in the issue of July 28, to which a Freethinker might object, that a complete reply to it would, I fear, occupy more space in your columns than the subject merits. Many of the points raised by your critic are, to my mind, not worthy of a reply, and it says much for your *tolerance* that you allowed them to appear at all; the fact that you did so is in itself helping to disprove the accusation of intolerance.

Much as I admire his avowed ambition to get young men to think for themselves, I question whether he will be very successful until he is able to clarify his own thought. Having achieved this, it may be possible for him to eventually grasp the meaning of Freethought, but he must not rush matters. Meanwhile, may I recommend to his notice your recent lectures on "Freethought and Life"?

You must, I am sure, have been greatly impressed by your critic's extreme modesty, in that he only requested you to set apart one page of the paper for the purpose of airing the views of gentlemen like himself, possessing a free mind and outlook.

"Free publicity for Free minds," may sound an attractive proposition for the latter, but if Mr. Whitham's contribution is a fair sample of what we might expect from the Free minds, please spare us!

To say, as does Mr. Whitham, "Christianity has long left Bible-dogma and its progress," is merely to join an untruth to a meaningless phrase. Perhaps the conjunction is a misprint. Christianity, as taught in the Catholic Church, remains essentially the same doctrine as has been taught by that institution throughout the ages. Indeed, it is the boast of that Church, that its doctrines do not change. And I have yet to learn that the more liberal Protestant Church has even *officially* renounced any of the cardinal doctrines of Christianity, such as the Fall of Man, the Resurrection, etc; despite the utterances of a few of its "daring thinkers." When this seeker after truth—our critic—reminded us that in ordinary minds Christianity means not creed or its practices, but a standard of conduct based on laws and customs, he strikes a familiar note, which leads me to suspect that his "thinking" is not of such an independent character as he would have us believe. The identification of Christianity with ethics, and particularly its close association with all the virtues, excepting apparently mental honesty and courtesy, is the last resort of a few of the modern apologists, who do not appear to realize that in shearing it of its miraculous and more barbarous elements they are, to use a well known simile, throwing the baby away with the bath-water. Apart from this, it is a thoroughly dishonest practice, so bare-faced in its utter misrepresentation of the facts that it is not likely, I think, to deceive even "ordinary minds," although it may deceive Mr. Whitham.

A. HEATH.

THE PASSING OF A PIONEER.

SIR.—I was interested in Victor B. Neuburg's "Passing of a Pioneer," in the current *Freethinker*. I knew Neuburg when he was associated with "Saladin," and was on friendly terms with Owen at the time of his Mexican exposure, but became strongly opposed to him when he went pro-war and Imperialist. I cannot see how an Anarchist can be an Imperialist, and I strongly object to all grave-side ceremony. I hope you will allow me, therefore, to contradict an error that may go abroad through Friend Neuburg's report. Mentioning a number of persons whose names are known in the Anarchist and Freethought Movements, it says: "Mr. and Mrs. Aldred of *The Sanctuary*." Up to now I concluded that I was the only known Aldred in these movements. I have never heard of the *Sanctuary*, although I would like to see a copy. But I was not present. I would not have attended this ceremony on principle. Whoever the Mr. Aldred was who was present, it was not the present writer.

GUY ALDRED.

AS OTHERS SEE US?

SIR.—Your amusing little journal has been sent me by

one of your readers, but, as he has not given me his address, it is impossible to reply except through your columns.

I am not unacquainted with the fact that people who call themselves Atheists do exist as I have spent many hours in the London parks proving to them the futility of their position, but I have never previously been honoured by receiving their organ of expression, the *Freethinker*.

One thing about the paper surprises me. It claims to be up to date, ahead of the time, etc., etc. Strangely enough, though, most of the educated opinion of the country to-day on religious matters is either Theistic or Pantheistic, but certainly not Materialistic, and the general public is more interested in religious matters than perhaps it has ever been, and the newspapers are satisfying the demand by publishing articles on religious subjects.

Twenty or thirty years ago Materialism as a philosophy of life was held by a large number (perhaps a majority) of thinking people, but that is no longer so to-day.

I have often thought how annoying it must be for you in your campaign against God to know:—

That millions "listen-in" to a religious service and address every Sunday in this country.

That most of the best philosophers and scientists of the day are religious men.

That most of the schools insist on religious instruction being given.

That the Press is increasingly willing to educate the public mind religiously.

That the Bible has a greater circulation than any other book in the world.

That at a time when the monarchy never stood higher in public opinion the King sets the people the example of regular church-going.

(Rev.) J. R. HIGGS, B.A.

"IS SCIENCE RELIABLE?"

SIR.—The readers of your journal owe Admiral C. M. Beadnell a debt of gratitude for his timely and exhaustive refutation of the charge insinuated in Mr. Kerr's question. To ask "Is Science Reliable?" is as inept a query as to ask, "Is gold a noble metal," seeing that it is generally associated with such dross as found in the earth. That would be confounding a gold-bearing reef or lode with the precious metal it contains. Similarly, Mr. Kerr in his insinuating question confounds Science with Scientists, whose mental equipment includes too often a vast amount of superstition and folly intermingled with sterling scientific erudition.

Occasionally nuggets of gold are found pure and free from dross; so a few giant minds appear from time to time, like Spencer, the great Huxley, Tyndall, and Clifford, whose mental contents were high pure ore. As a rule, however, the opinions, beliefs, or convictions of scientists have to be passed through the filters of reason, observation, and common sense, to get the "brood of folly without father bred"—the offspring of pagan tradition and egregious credulity—separated from the gold of fact and sound deduction.

This treatment is imperatively necessary now-a-days, for ever since the tidal bore of reaction has set in, scientists, with few exceptions, like Sir Arthur Keith, have taken to play to the angelic gallery, whose plaudits they feverishly bid to secure. This, probably, is Mr. Kerr's sole justification for his question.

Let me therefore repeat: the scientist is no more science than an auriferous rock is gold. Science is verified or verifiable knowledge—the cognizable gold that has been or is being "tried by fire," and is on that account the only section of human cognition that has any claim upon our credence.

KERIDON.

Society News.

HEAVY rain prevented a start being made at Swansea on the opening evening. On the Sunday, however, a very large crowd was waiting for Mr. Whitehead's appearance, and a successful meeting was the result, accompanied by an opposition meeting from a local fanatic,

who never fails to make himself ridiculous on Mr. Whitehead's visit. Altogether six meetings were addressed at Swansea, to the apparent satisfaction of a large number of sympathizers and visitors from the outlying villages who were in town for the holidays. One of the meetings was rather lively at question time, but for the most part good humour prevailed. Mr. Whitehead will be in the Swansea district until August 23 inclusive, Gorseinon and Neath being among the places to be visited.

Bill's Prayer.

O LORD, 'oo myde the lot of us,
Made in Thy 'nimmidge (mostly fools!),
Busted like pups beneath a 'bus,
Wiv-out no knowledge of the Rules:
'Oo finds us work—or sumfink wuss,
Immejitly we've pawned ahr tools:
'Oo blymes us if we blind and cuss,
But leaves the Scriptures to the schools:
I 'opped the schools, I hadn't none,
I learned my language Wapping Stair;
The 'oliest thing I ever done
Is coughing up this word o' prayer!

Yet life and sun, and love and fun,
I cops in driblets (here an' there!),
While better blokes nor me gets none—
Great Gawd, I arks yer, is it fair?

Lord, I believe your toffs as tell
You treats no person wiv respect:
The sinful an' the soft as well—
They cops it equal in the neck!
Some swanks life well—some gets a cell—
Some in the work'us eats their peck;
And when it's done . . . you tips us Hell!—
Great Gawd, you made us, recollect!

The simple an' the vile, depryved,
Wot you have ground an' roasted, stern,
Is each a little Text engryved—
"Lord Gawd, look down on Earth—and Learn!"

I wouldn't barge you, "Oh, be syved!"
I wouldn't barnee you, "Sinner turn!"—
I only arks: "Have you be'yved
As decent as the chaps you burn?"

Lord, it ain't 'arf a cruel joke
To stint us, starve us, do us brahn
In life an' love, in togs an' toke,
And at the end to . . . let us dahn!
If some benighted Befual bloke
Should treat his pal on such a plan,
In 'arf a jiff 'e'd be in choke—
You may be Gawd!—but are you . . . Man?—
A decent Man? A true Man would
Give us the griffin, tell us wot
Us wot! But busy "being good"
You've got no time to help one jot!

So, Gawd, if I've been talking rude,
I can't hide longer all my thort—
I can't invite you to be GOOD—
But, Gawd Almighty, be a sport!

J. M. STUART-YOUNG.

IF CHRIST WERE HERE NOW.

The scripture, Matt. xxvi. 27, reads: "And He (Jesus) took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying: Drink ye all of it." The following should be restored to the text:—

"And a prohibition agent, which was without, now entered in.

"And when he had pinched the bunch and padlocked the place, he laid hold on Jesus, and delivered Him to the law, as the board of temperance, prohibition and morals commanded.

"And bringing Him to the place of the cross, they crucified Him; for he was an habitual offender.

From "The Chicago Daily Journal."

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.

THE NON-POLITICAL METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (The Orange Tree, Euston Road, N.W.1): August 22, at 10, Tottenham Court Road, Social and Dance, 7.30 to 11.30. Admission 1s.

OUTDOOR.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 12.0, Mr. James Hart; 3.30, Messrs. E. Betts and James Hart; 6.30, Messrs. B. A. Le Maine and A. H. Hyatt. Freethought meetings every Wednesday at 7.30, Messrs. Tuson and J. Hart. Every Friday at 7.30, Mr. B. A. Le Maine. The *Freethinker* may be obtained during our meetings outside the Park Gate, Bayswater Road.

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

FINSBURY PARK BRANCH N.S.S., 11.15, Mr. F. P. Corrigan—A Lecture.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N.S.S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand): 3.15, Mr. B. A. Le Maine—"Bible Criticisms."

FULHAM AND CHELSEA BRANCH N.S.S. (corner of Shorrolds Road, North End Road): Saturday, 8.0; Effie Road, Waltham Green Station, Sunday, 8.0.—Various Speakers.

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

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

WEST HAM BRANCH N.S.S. (Outside Technical College, Romford Road, Stratford, E.): 7.0, Mr. H. C. White—A Lecture.

STREATHAM COMMON BRANCH N.S.S., 6.30, Mr. F. P. Corrigan—A Lecture.

COUNTRY.

OUTDOOR.

LIVERPOOL (Merseyside) BRANCH N.S.S. (Deanmont Street): Monday, August 19, at 7.30, Mr. J. V. Short—A Lecture.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE BRANCH N.S.S. (Town Moor, near North Road entrance): 7.0, Mr. R. Atkinson—A Lecture.

CHESTER-LE-STREET BRANCH N.S.S.—Friday, August 16, Queen Street, Spennymoor, 7.30, Mr. J. T. Brighton and Mr. T. Brown Wednesday, August 21, Hervington, near Burn, 7.30, Mr. J. T. Brighton; Saturday, August 17, Anthony Street, West Stanley, 7.30, Mr. J. T. Brighton and Mr. T. Brown.

SWANSEA AND DISTRICT BRANCH N.S.S., Mr. George Whitehead will lecture every evening until August 23.

MR. J. CLAYTON will lecture at the following places: Sunday, August 18, Rawtenstall, 7.45; Tuesday, 20, Great Harwood, 8.0; Wednesday, 21, Sabden, 7.30; Friday, 23, Crawshawbooth, 7.45.

GLASGOW BRANCH N.S.S.—Ramble to Harelan Dam. Meet at Barrhead Centre at 12 noon.

Miscellaneous Advertisements.

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Dr. Secheyay in the "Swiss Medical Review."
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(Dr. Grun in the King's Bench Division.)

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