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Views and Opinions.

The Advance of Rome.

THE Roman Catholic Church in England has made the most of the Centenary Celebrations of Roman Catholic Emancipation. The occasion for political emancipation was a reminder, on the one hand, of Christian intolerance, on the other, that it was only with the broadening of the intellectual outlook consequent on a weakening of belief in religion in general, that the disabilities of Roman Catholics were swept away. Had the cardinal Roman Catholic dogma that the Church should rule the State been retained, the Roman Church to-day would have had nothing to celebrate. Roman Catholics were disfranchised by Protestants because the latter took over from the Roman Church its dogma that religious opinions should be supreme in the Secular State; and it was only as the Secular State asserted its supremacy, that it became possible to view men and women as citizens, and not as members of this or that religious sect.

There are two other questions involved here, at which I have only time to glance. The first is the reminder that all over Europe every State has sooner or later been driven in sheer self-defence to place some limit to the operations of the Christian Churches. The Roman Church is the most glaring example of this because it is the oldest of them all, and has had greater opportunities for evil than the others. But Calvinism in Geneva, Puritanism in England and America, Presbyterianism in Scotland, are examples to hand of the same fact.

The second point is the highly controversial one of how far one can afford, as a mere matter of expediency, to give complete freedom to a Church that not merely declines to give anything like freedom of political action to its own members, but is committed by its professed principles to fight and plot for the subordination of the State to Roman Catholicism. It is absolutely certain that given enough strength the Roman Church would see to it that none but its followers held office in the State, even if it did not

revert to its historic policy of the forcible suppression of the non-Catholic and anti-Catholic teaching. Commanding the most obedient and the most ignorant vote in Great Britain, we know that the vote is wielded largely at the command of the priest. The priest uses the Confessional and the threat of spiritual penalties to parents who will not send children to schools under the control of the Church, and in a hundred and one ways exercise its powers to direct social affairs. I do not know that I can blame Christians for acting thus. If I believed in Christianity, I should probably feel inclined to act in the same way. It is only one illustration of the anti-social nature of genuine Christian belief. But it does open the question, as a matter of pure expediency, of how far the State can risk giving complete liberty to a Church, which when left alone deeply injured every State it has dominated, which degraded Italy, ruined Spain, crushed out a civilization in South America, and almost ruined the civilization of the whole of Europe.

* * *

Rome and Reason.

I do not think there can be any question of the growth of Roman Catholicism in England to-day. The two things that are growing are, I think, the Roman Church, and I know, Freethought. The former grows at the expense of the other Christian sects; the latter at the expense of both. If the Roman Church represented a growth in opinion merely, one could watch its growth, in the circumstances, with absolute equanimity, content that in its fight against the growth of enlightened opinion the Church is waging a hopeless warfare. Opinion is the one thing that no Christian Church—or any other Church—has ever been able to fight with success. An idea can only be fought with permanent success by another idea, and the Church has none at its command which can promise it ultimate victory. It can and does attack the Protestant idea with considerable success, for in this direction it holds the trump cards. Liberty of judgment with a god-given revelation is a howling absurdity. The outcome of that theory is, as the great Roman Catholic theologians of the seventeenth century saw and said, disruption. And with the disruption of the Protestant bodies there has naturally been an influx of the timidly superstitious towards the great mother of superstition, and of the more robust intellects towards definite Freethinking.

So when one of the speakers at the Roman Catholic Congress at Caxton Hall, said:—

We are receiving converts from almost all denominations and sects. As people realize that Protestantism is dying they must instinctively turn to the ever-growing Roman Catholic Church. The Church of England is fast becoming a farce. Numerically we have just as much right to be the national Church. The Church of England will soon change to a sect and even possibly to an insect.

I am inclined to agree with him, with reservation. The Church of England only became the State Church because it was forced by law on the people, and that is the only way in which any Church was ever established. The Roman Church itself sailed to power on a sea of blood, and maintained its position by the most brutal use of force of which history holds record. And it will not do to let Roman Catholics know that Christianity to-day is itself only a religious sect. It is part of the great world of superstition that holds sway over so much of the human mind from the savage down to the East End work-girl purchasing her love-philtre, and is part and parcel of it. The affiliation of Christianity to the superstitions of the world is now a completed fact, and only the Church which did not admit the revolution of the earth round the sun until about a hundred years ago, would seriously dispute it.

* * *

Suicidal Progress.

I think it was Huxley who said that Roman Catholics were the Bourbons of the world of thought. Like many epigrams it is apt to be overstrained in application. The Roman Church is not above learning, its rulers are too "cute" to ignore the use that certain things may be to it, when it can no longer suppress them. But in this welcoming of converts from the other churches it appears to lose sight of the important fact that unless the Church can again secure control of the Secular State its converts are as likely to hasten its decline as anything else. Look at the Protestant Churches! There is no question that the intellectual calibre of them all sinks lower with the passing of each generation. This is not due to the fact that its teachings are more stupid than they were, they are not. The main cause why the Church has sunk so low, is that the causes that have diverted the better intellect of the nation into other channels, have delivered the control of the Church into the hands of the least intellectual of its supporters. A Church that can show no better mentality than is shown by the ruling bishops of the Church of England is, indeed, fast lapsing into senility. Not the least significant is it that when men of moderate ability such as Dean Inge and Bishop Barnes make their voices heard, they are denounced by the orthodox as heretical, and, one may expect, regarded by others in the Church as more or less of a nuisance.

Now, assuming that the Roman Church does go on absorbing large numbers of those who leave the other Churches, what may one imagine will be the consequence? In the political field, where the vote of the fool counts for as much as that of the philosopher, it may lead to a certain transitory strength. But those who enter the Roman Church from other churches represent the more congenitally superstitious, and Monkeyville while enjoying a certain strength in Tennessee represents a poor outfit with which to conquer the world. In a way the problem before the Roman Church is the problem which faces Communism in Russia. Its ability to maintain itself appears to depend very largely upon its ability to convert the rest of the world to its views. As the world is, it is rather a large thing to expect a State like Russia to maintain itself "undefiled" while holding open communications with the rest of the world. So with the Roman Church. The aim of the Roman Church, like the aim of Bolshevism is the conquest of the world. It must control, not merely the political votes of the unthinking, but the moral support of the thinking. In other words, its ability to maintain physical control, must depend upon its ultimate ability to maintain spiritual control. Unless it can do this, or has hopes of doing this, the influx of large

numbers of grossly superstitious folk, whether they come from the "lower" or the upper stratum means a source of weakness, not of strength. The killing difference between the Roman Church and the world of genuine education will become more distinct as a particular type of member becomes more powerful.

We come back to the old fact—the fight of the Roman Church—indeed, of any Church—is a fight to gain control of civilization. This is attempted in many ways. There is the attempt to capture the child and to give a permanent twist to its intellect that will protect it against the religiously corroding influence of modern life and thought; there is the attempt to control educational influences—the press, the platform, the cinema, the theatre, etc; there is the endeavour to isolate man from civilizing and humanizing influences through the agency of pantomimic religious processions and Church attendance. There is, of course, the weapon of stark naked force, but that is demonstrably an instrument that has failed so often in the most favourable circumstances that one can hardly expect it to be successful to-day. The Church's hope for success ultimately depends upon its ability to control and direct the course of civilization. Can it do so? I doubt it. For some time longer it will continue to bribe, to threaten, to coerce in various ways, and there will continue for a long time to be numbers of people who will submit to social and other forms of bribery. But even these timid souls will gradually pluck up courage to stand upright as the gap between genuine culture and religion becomes too obvious to be ignored. The world moves slowly, but it moves.

In connexion with these celebrations Mr. G. K. Chesterton delivered an address on "Emancipation of the Atheist." We will deal with that next week.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

Heat-Wave Heroics.

"He that loveth not his brother at his side,
How can he love a dim dream deified?"

Jas. Thomson.

"Do the duty which lieth nearest thee."—Carlyle.

The recent hot weather has been the cause of some curious happenings. It has caused the British clergy to pray for rain, and in so doing, to lower themselves to the level of their coloured prototypes in tropical countries. It has also caused a bishop of the State Church to frame an indictment of a whole nation, a thing which has been declared to be a frank impossibility.

Mind you, bishops, being priests, are accustomed to lampooning their fellow-men. They start, invariably, with the impolite assumption that all mankind is a collection of "miserable sinners," which is untrue, for some men, as Shakespeare says, may smile and yet be villains. And priests are venomous, too, in their insults. Charles the Second was convinced that all men were scoundrels, but he thought none the worse of them on that account. Priests, unlike the Merry Monarch, do think badly of human nature. Our particular bishop, too, has managed to out-Herod Herod, and has plainly added insult to injury. Not contented with regarding our lively generation as sinners, which is bad enough, he says that it is composed of fatheads, which is unpardonable in any but a schoolboy.

We must "speak by the card, or equivocation will undo us." The Rt. Rev. Dr. Donaldson, Bishop of Salisbury, has been writing, in an evening contemporary, on "This Modern Age of Swollen Head." This, he submits, with true episcopal modesty, is "the main danger of our generation." Modern man

"has too much ego in his cosmos," as the German professor said of the gorilla in Kipling's story. The cause of this self-centralization is that Modern Man is "dazzled by his own achievements," and is painting the town red.

It is all very sad, but worse is to come. The bishop scolds like a scullion. Modern man, he declares,

"Looks out upon the civilization around him very much in the spirit of the successful monarch of old (who also suffered from swollen head) when he said, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have builded for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty."

The modern man might retort that there was precious little Christian (or other) charity in all this. What old-world Semites thought of King What's-his-name has no association with Twentieth Century Britain. And if the founder of the Christian Religion travelled on a donkey, and we journey by aeroplane, there is no reason in being nasty concerning the matter. That donkey could never have won the Schneider Trophy, although he was under distinguished patronage.

All this jargon concerning the swelled head of the modern man is simply a proof that the Bishop of Salisbury has joined the large band of contemporary Jeremiahs who are bewailing the growing unpopularity of religion. There are fewer threepenny bits in the collection bags. There is a beggarly array of empty benches in the churches. The organists are rushing to the cinemas to get better wages. Curates, like Oliver Twist, have the audacity to "ask for more."

The Bishop's concern is not so much with the welfare of the modern man, but with the prosperity of his own sorry profession. It is as plain as a pike-staff:—

"There is one feature of our modern mood which is of sinister importance. We have crowded God out."

Why, "sinister"? Because crowding out "god" means pushing out "god's" representatives—the clergy. Crowding out a "god" ought not to be a serious crime. If so, the bishop himself is guilty of it. He rejects all deities except one, and the chief difference between this priest and the out-and-out atheist is simply the question of one deity out of hundreds.

The cat is out of the bag. Our generation is suffering from swelled head, because it is largely indifferent to clerical claims, which are not remarkable for their modesty. Priests regard the layman as a mere flunkey, to be ordered here, there, everywhere, and to be exploited always. The modern man does not see the necessity. Hence the bishop's tears:—

"Here is the danger of our time. The urgency if it may not yet be clearly apparent. The impetus of a thousand years of Christianity is capable of carrying us on for some time yet without much sign of the atrophy of the life within. But none the less the deeds of destruction are already sown where men try to shape the course of human progress without god."

The great World War, which the clergy told us was to lead to a revival of religion, has been a very trying time, not only to the ecclesiastics of the State Church, but to the priests of all denominations. They have lost members, revenue, and reputation, and they are beginning to get really frightened at the prospect. In the ages of Faith the priests did not implore, they threatened, and they prosecuted.

In the eighteenth century Peter Annet ventured to criticize the Christian Bible and the clergy. For publishing the *Free Inquirer* he was brought before the King's Bench and sentenced to one month's im-

prisonment in Newgate, to stand twice in the pillory with a label "For Blasphemy," then to have a year's hard labour at Bridewell, and to find sureties for his good behaviour during the rest of his life. It is related that a woman, seeing Annet in the pillory, said, "Gracious! pilloried for blasphemy. Why don't we all blaspheme every day?" Since the old schoolmaster was pilloried the Christian Church has lost much of its power, and to-day ecclesiastics have to admit that the despised Freethinkers were right.

The Bishop of Salisbury pretends that modern men reject his Gospel message because they are fatheads. The very reverse of this is far nearer the truth. The average man of to-day has grave doubts as to the genuineness of this particular Gospel message, and hesitates to believe that the key to Truth, Beauty, and Goodness is in the hands of the Bench of Bishops, or indeed, of any body of professional priests of any faith.

The twenty-nine years of this present century have witnessed a silent revolution in our knowledge. Its full significance may not be universally recognized, but its amazing triumphs are plain to every eye. This widening of knowledge is being felt everywhere, for it is making grown men of us, and we cannot go back to the toys of our childhood if we would. Our forefathers being innocent of learning, bore themselves with humility in the presence of a tyrannical priesthood. This generation, better schooled and more inquisitive, is beginning to realize that priests are charlatans, who pretend to powers neither they nor any other men have claims to, and make comfortable livings in the process.

MIMNERMUS.

A Medley on Man and His Works.

THE most ancient human fossil so far discovered in Europe is the famous jaw from the Mauer deposit near Heidelberg. This jaw is noticeably brutal in appearance, but is unmistakably human. The fragments of the skull found at Piltdown, in Sussex, are also of high antiquity. Its lower jaw is remarkably ape-like in structure, but the cranium is distinctly human, and was probably that of a member of a group of undifferentiated Tertiary Primates who were the progenitors of Neanderthal man on the one side, and of *Homo sapiens* on the other.

The early Old Stone or Lower Palæolithic Age was characterized by two leading cultures, the Chellean and the Acheulean, which arose in succession, but we are ignorant of the appearance of the people of these periods.

Far ampler is our knowledge concerning the races of the Middle Palæolithic Period—the Mousterian Age—whose remains in the form of skulls, and sometimes of skeletons, have been brought to light at Neanderthal, Spy, Le Moustier, Gibraltar, Krapina and elsewhere. These are the relics of the celebrated Neanderthal race. There were however, wide differences in the shape of the skull, most of which belonged to a dolichocephalic or long-headed stock; while Spy II, and Gibraltar were mesocephalic or medium in form, and Krapina, brachycephalic or broad-headed.

The various evidences available indicate that, with the retreat of the Würm Ice Age, the early European hunting peoples spread over the continent from the Western Mediterranean basin. Another migration arrived from the east. These stocks introduced the Aurignacian and Solutrien cultures from their original homes. And although hunting has long ceased as the primary occupation with civilized races,

the chase has remained a popular pastime with most European races ever since the coming of these nomadic adventurers in prehistoric times.

The relatively genial climate of this period was succeeded by the colder Buhl stage, and the open-air life of the wanderers gave way to a more sheltered existence near or within the caves. This, the Magdalenian Age of the archæologists, witnessed a wonderful outburst of pictorial and plastic art which, when revealed to the modern world, aroused its admiration and astonishment.

As the glacial conditions once more abated—and permanently, so far in Europe—part of the western land mass sank beneath the sea, and the British Isles were separated from the continent. Copious rainfall borne by winds tempered by the warm Gulf Stream promoted forest growth throughout Europe, and these forests harboured an immense population of bears, wolves, wild boars, birds of prey and other animals. The less productive and exposed uplands and sand dunes were comparatively dry, and sufficiently free from woodland growth to permit man's pastoral activities, and there the art of herding animals was carried on. Herding and hunting were now presumably supplemented by rude culture of corn. But, with the beginnings of agriculture, men still wandered from place to place. The permanent farm and homestead was still to come. Yet, with the evolution of domesticated animals, the migratory habit was gradually restricted by the quality of the pastures, and the special requirements of the different seasons of the year.

In Neolithic times the ceramic art was discovered with the many advantages derived from the possession of pottery. In the Swiss lakes permanent domiciles were established, and cereals and other plants were cultivated. Weaving had become a woman's occupation. The remains disclosed in the lake dwellings suggest both settlement and trade. Also, the distribution of the stone monuments, and other facts sustain the view that long distance maritime commerce existed both at the close of the Neolithic, and at the time when bronze and copper were being introduced to the several European coast peoples. Prof. H. J. Fleure points out in his *Peoples of Europe*, that, "a recently discovered tablet, dated 2800 B.C., gives facts about a tribute paid to Babylon from tin mines beyond the Great Sea (Spain). Development of settlement must have continued in the Bronze Age, still mainly on the naturally open lands rather than in the cleared forest, and it is a notable fact that, save in a very few areas with special explanations available, the regions of megaliths do not show examples of the kind of village, with strips owned in common, which is so characteristic of regions of cleared forest."

Bronze is an alloy of copper and tin in the proportion of about nine parts of copper to one of tin. Instruments and implements of bronze now proved an enormous lever to progress. There is ample evidence that with their bronze axes, the woods were made to bow before the sturdy strokes of the men of the Bronze Age.

With the later use of iron, however, the vast forests were far more rapidly subjugated by the hand of man. Permanent pastures and arable lands were now more fully available. In Southern Europe, it is said, the hot and dry summers which succeeded the Ice Age materially assisted in the reduction of the forest area. There, large limestone districts abounded with "the sharp slopes which have always hindered re-growth of forest once destroyed."

In classical times the goat, so inimical to the vine, provided a meet sacrifice to Bacchus, the divinity of

the fermented grape. This animal, nevertheless, occupies an important position in Southern Europe. In infertile regions where pasture is poor, the goat replaces the cattle and sheep of more favoured lands. Partly in consequence, great herds of destructive goats which thrive on rough herbage have foraged on the forest trees, and seriously hindered their recovery. Although the flesh of the goat is by some esteemed, and the animal may serve as the poor man's milch cow, its reputation is commonly regarded as evil. The naturalist, Karl Vogt, averred that the legend of the devil's special creation of the goat is amply justified. He stigmatises the quadruped as "the most destructive creature in the world in forests, and the old seats of civilization—the countries round the Mediterranean—owe the destruction of their forests, the nakedness of their mountains, and the inevitable consequences of that condition, the dryness of their climate, to the devastations of these animals."

Husbandry in the Mediterranean dates from remote times, and doubtless hand cultivation of the soil was promoted by the scarcity of the more important ruminating animals. Italy is, and has long been celebrated for its vineyards, its orange and lemon groves, its olive gardens, its barley, and now its wheat fields.

In Southern and Western Europe alike, so soon as the hunting and pastoral stages had been supplemented by the raising of fruits and cereals, there arose a constant demand for salt. It is noteworthy that in the early Iron Age, Gaulish settlements were established in close proximity to salt supplies, and this invaluable preservative was everywhere obtainable in the Mediterranean region. The wild pig was apparently domesticated in the Age of Bronze, and in the words of Prof. Fleure, "the salting of bacon and fish gave a reserve for the winter . . . In thinking of the early settlements we should remember that in the north of the Alps there was perpetual danger lurking in the dark forest, while in the south there were the rough goat herds of the mountains."

With the evolution of property, whether personal or communal, and the necessity for its protection, hill-fortress towns were erected in Gaul and other territories. As the centuries sped on, and the Roman dominion waxed and waned, wheat, the monarch of cereals, was extensively cultivated throughout the Empire. The period of Pagan supremacy was distinguished by road communications that were created or improved, while that prime necessity, iron, became less costly, and a remarkable system of Roman law materially regulated the lives of men. All these and other influences served to attach the people to the soil. Even now, in Britain these influences may be traced.

The Anglo-Saxon invasion of England made many permanent changes, but much survived from a prehistoric past in the manners, customs and traditions of the country. The outstanding result of Rome's overthrow was what Gibbon termed the triumph of barbarism and religion. The Catholic Dark Ages were dark indeed. When the light began to break, the civilization established by the Moors in Spain, and the influences of what Italian culture had evaded the sinister interference of the Church, materially assisted in the intellectual recovery of Europe. Voyages of discovery enlarged the human outlook, and evolution was fostered by the growth of industry and commerce. These and other phenomena seemed to weaken the power and prestige of a Latin Church which aimed at spiritual and temporal despotism.

In an age of faith, when every disaster or disease was regarded as a divine visitation, there was small progress in agriculture. There appears to have arisen a universal complaint of the diminished fertility of the soil. This, with other disadvantages contri-

bated to the collapse of the village communities in Western Europe. Eastern Europe, then as now, remained relatively backward, but even there, the village system ultimately decayed, Russia alone retaining the mir until the last.

Modern France enjoys many agrarian advantages, and as the late Lilian Knowles has shown was, at the outbreak of the Great Revolution, the most advanced industrial State in Europe. England then assumed the leadership and became the scene of the great discoveries and inventions which have since transformed the world's manufactures. English agriculture was immensely improved in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The peasant, unfortunately, was doomed to the position of a landless labourer. Material progress, generally, has exceeded the wildest dreams of a few generations ago. But industrial troubles in many lands baffle the wisest of our statesmen and philosophers, while the nationalist revival, sometimes in the form of insular self-determination, has become a prominent feature in Flanders, Italy, the newly-created European States, and elsewhere. Still, let us trust that the War to end wars was not waged in vain.

T. F. PALMER.

The Kreutzer Sonata.

The Kreutzer Sonata is, as every one knows, a piano-and-violin piece by Beethoven, dedicated to his friend, Rudolph Kreutzer—a French composer of German lineage. But it is better known as the title of a short story, written by Tolstoy in 1890, when Tolstoy had just turned sixty years of age, and about ten years after he had made public the story of his turning to religion in *My Confession*.

Aylmer Maude, in his *Life of Tolstoy* (p. 383), tells us that: "The interest aroused by *The Kreutzer Sonata* was quite as vivid as that aroused by any other of Tolstoy's books." This is a very mild description of its reception, he must have been nodding when he made it. His statement, eighteen pages further on, that: "The publication of *The Kreutzer Sonata* produced a tremendous storm," is more correct. It was forbidden publication in Russia. It was regarded as indecent literature in the United States, and the Post Office refused to handle it.

Speaking personally, I can remember its publication well. People who had only expressed a languid interest in Tolstoy's conversion, a few years before, now became deeply interested. The man-in-the-street, who had only heard of Tolstoy by rumour, if that; and had certainly never heard of Beethoven's *Kreutzer Sonata*, hastened to obtain a copy. To give some idea of the popularity this story obtained, I may say that I have before me a copy of it in paper covers, embellished with a crude illustration representing, apparently, Pozdnishéf supporting his wife in his arms after he had fatally stabbed her; it consists of thirty-two pages (Fourth issue) and the price was one penny! There must have been an enormous number printed, to make a profit.

There are defenders of the Victorian era, who declare that it was the age of great and revolutionary ideas. They point to the work of Darwin, Spencer, Huxley, Tylor, Lubbock, Buckle, Lecky, Thomas Hardy, and Swinburne for proof.

Yes, it is true; these great men were all pioneers of advanced thought. But to pretend that they represented the thought of the ordinary representative Englishman of the Victorian age is not only grossly misleading, but demonstrably false. These men, and their ideas, were fiercely opposed by the great mass of

the nation, led by the clergy of all the Churches, Catholic, Established, and Nonconformist.

The Victorian era was also pre-eminently the reign of prudery. Those Pontius Pilate's of Nonconformity, the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, and W. T. Stead, created a veritable reign of terror. They broke Parnell and hounded him to his grave. They hunted Sir Charles Dilke out of public life, simply because they had both been dragged through the Divorce Court. Two of the best public men of their age, far better than their pious, narrow-minded, self-appointed judges. Queen Victoria herself, would permit no one who had been divorced to appear at her Court.

In the Nonconformist environment in which my youth was spent, any allusion to such vital subjects as Birth Control, Venereal Disease, Prostitution, or the advisability of a reform of the marriage contract, in order to relieve the pain and suffering often attending that state of life, was considered indecent and obscene. Charles Bradlaugh declared that he had been more violently assailed for his advocacy of Malthusianism than even for his Atheism.

Dickens and Tennyson strike the true Victorian note in these matters. Mr. Hugh Kingsmill has well summed up their attitude. Of Dickens, he says:—

His "unfortunates" emerge suddenly out of the night to gaze with hungry despair at the face of a Rose Maylie or a Little Dorrit . . . they, too, once . . . Oh, Heavens! . . . then back into the pitchy blackness with a wild uncharitably cry; leaving the modern reader to wonder at the nerves of tempered steel the Victorian *roué* must have possessed to get into bed against odds like these.

In calling a prostitute an "unfortunate" the Victorians wished to imply that a prostitute was someone who had invested in the wrong stock, in spite of the advice of more experienced investors. Hence the questions which Hood asks about the prostitute who commits suicide in his poem, *The Bridge of Sighs*:—

Who was her father?
Who was her mother?
Had she a sister?
Had she a brother?

These questions are not asked for the sake of information. They are purely rhetorical. Hood knew well that his heroine was one of a large and otherwise innocent family, and had come into lack of existence simply to illustrate what happens to a girl who neglects the practical counsel of her relatives. Such counsels had been given her freely, but she had ignored them, and therefore:—

Sisterly, brotherly,
Fatherly, motherly
Feelings had changed.

It is as a blackleg against the trade union of the family that Hood sees her. She is "rash and undutiful," she has been guilty of "mutiny"; and that is the final impression of the poem in spite of signs here and there that Hood sees her also as an individual, related to the tragedy of life directly and not as a unit of the family system.¹

Of Tennyson's ideas, as illustrated in his *Idylls of the King*, the same writer observes that: "Mutiny of a far grosser kind, because committed against a husband, is also the keynote of Arthur's farewell address to Guinevere, a Victorian document of unequalled importance. Its extreme popularity with the Victorians as a moving and magnanimous expression of the correct attitude towards an unfaithful wife entitles it to a lengthy analysis."² But Tennyson was only reflecting the horror with which the Victorians regarded any violation of marriage vows. To the great edification of the Victorians, he shows how the adultery of King Arthur's Queen Guinevere,

¹ Hugh Kingsmill. *Matthew Arnold*. pp. 6-8.

² *Ibid.* p. 8.

with Lancelot, upset the round table, scattered the knights, and in some occult and mysterious manner, unexplained, brought the "Godless hosts of heathen swarming o'er the Northern Sea." And to crown all, brings about the death of Arthur himself. For which relief, however, we are profoundly thankful, and only regret that Tennyson did not slay him before he made those idiotic speeches, which would disgrace even the calf-love of a school-boy.

Such was the state of public opinion, in this country, when Tolstoy threw his bomb, *The Kreutzer Sonata*. It is written in his best style. The style he only reaches when he is uttering something he has felt, or endured. In this short story he puts forth all his strength. He is giving vent to his long pent up thoughts on marriage and sex.

The story is told by a passenger during a short journey in a railway carriage, and the text round which it is written are the words of Christ. "Every one that looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." The travellers, one of whom is a barrister, fall into conversation about love and marriage, and presently a nervous and hitherto silent passenger, evidently much excited by the conversation, suddenly interjects the question: "What about this love which consecrates marriage?" This leads to considerable argument, until the barrister, to illustrate a point, observes: "Look at the case of Pozdnishéf who killed his wife out of Jealousy?" The nervous passenger changed colour and said: "I see you have guessed who I am. I am Pozdnishéf."

W. MANN.

(To be continued.)

Heinrich Heine.

SHOLOM Aleichem! Greetings to thee, Heinrich Heine
Wherever thy restless shade may wander,
Peerless One: Noble One: Still we remember thee,
great poet,
Thy Immortal songs and thy great, too great, sufferings.
Still we enjoy with zest, with never flagging appetite,
Thy peerless jests,
The lambent, flashing irony,
Deadly rapier thrusts
With which thou pierced the rotten carcass of the Philistine,
And flung him in the dust with his attendant weights,
Humbug, Cant, Hypocrisy,
And general Mediocrity.
Greetings again; thou scourge of Gods and Godlings.

And if there be a God, of which the Christians tell,
My parting wish is this—
May you meet him, Heinrich Heine—only, please await
my coming,
That I may witness it—that meeting.
How the Halls of Heaven will shake,
And the attendant Angels quake,
How the Crystal Dome will echo, with thy bitter, mocking
laughter,
The Pearly Gates swing off their hinges,
The Throne of Light come toppling after,
The alabaster pavements will be rent and torn asunder,
Lightnings flash, and thunderbolts be hurled,
But not by God—by Thee, O Heine,
Greater far than God . . .

JOSEPH MARAH.

The old form of things is on the decline: the life forms of yesterday are no longer vital. If new life is to be born out of old, the desert must first be flooded with the fragments of past cultures. Thus the desert will slowly be transformed into fruitful farming land.

Count Hermann Keyserling.

Acid Drops.

Chatham Town Council has ordered a referendum of the ratepayers on the question of the opening of Cinemas on Sunday. It is quite illegal to open them on Sunday, but we do not suppose that anyone will take action. Anyway, the demand for Sunday opening of anything does not rest upon the desire of the majority to go to the cinema, but upon that of the right of any body of men, in the name of their peculiar religious delusion, denying to deny to others the right to enjoy themselves in a quite peaceful and legitimate way. One might just as reasonably take a referendum on the question of whether people should be permitted to call in a doctor, if the majority happened to believe in the efficacy of prayer.

The Rev. A. O. Standon, representing the Church of England, opposed the opening of Cinemas on Sunday, and objected to the statement that the people had nowhere to go on Sunday. "There are still the Churches," he pathetically remarked, doubtless with a regretful eye on the rows of empty benches that so often front the servants of the Lord. But one might reply of the lines of Lamb's description of cookery books as books that are not books, or Lord Russell's description of a glass of water as not being anything to drink. A church is a somewhere that people enter, but it is not anywhere to go. Can one imagine a man saying to a friend, "let's go somewhere," and then going to church? And a place that isn't somewhere must be nowhere.

Mr. H. F. Rubenstein says:—

As the law now stands, it is possible during a wave of puritanism to suppress almost anything except the telephone directory.

That being the fact, the more enlightened citizens of the country should get together to promote legislation for altering a state of affairs so dangerous to the progress of ideas. Noting the pious tendency of our leading legislators, one may be pardoned for doubting whether a reform of this kind would be possible with the present Government in power.

We note the relish with which some parsons and religious writers delight to roll round their tongue the phrase, "The United States of Europe," in sermons and articles on Peace. Thomas Paine, the excited Freethinker, was the pioneer of this notion. If the world had been less Christianized, it might have achieved its "United States" and its League of Nations a hundred years before the last war was fought to end all wars.

The Rev. W. Lax, of Poplar, says that "man is incurably religious"; for man is sure that there is some great Power ruling everything, and he is "insatiably thirsty" to find out what sort of power it is—loving or vindictive? For our part we think Sunday the ideal day for discovering how "incurably religious" man is, and how eager to learn all about God. Judging by the millions endeavouring to make the most of one world at a time, we fancy the reverend gent is misinformed. These millions may be "insatiably thirsty" for religion, but we hardly think they will find it where many of them look—in a pint glass of beer. Still, there's no telling. We wouldn't care to dogmatize on the matter.

A preacher says that only Christ can give any reliable tidings about God's character, for he said in effect—"God is like me." This is comforting news. We know now that God is not a Freethinker. For Jesus never advocated that every man should have complete freedom to think and speak exactly what he thought. "Believe what I say, and do as I tell you," was his con-

mand. He aimed to create a race of gramophones and automatic machines—not a race of reasoning creatures. And the Churches have been carrying out the command ever since, making men Christ-like, and God-like. It is a healthy sign in Freethinkers that they have no desire to imitate Christ's or God's character as revealed in Holy Writ.

In criticism of an article in the *Methodist Recorder*, a true-blue Methodist writes as follows:—

The *Brownate of Truth* article, last week, on "Some Unrecognized Wiles of the Devil," was very clever, and the statement that "the devil's best servants are well-intentioned people with much zeal and little sense," was certainly strong. There is one noticeable omission among the devil's unconscious servants. After cleverly cartooning the puritanical denouncer of worldly amusements, the dogmatic teetotaler, the fundamentalist, and the loyal devotee of John Wesley, R. H. Brown should have added that the harm done by these zealots is negligible beside the worldly Christian who openly advocates "the dance and the play," who advertises that "Jesus was not teetotal," that Genesis does not mean what it says, and that Wesley is no guide for a Wesleyan preacher. This is the devil's worker with a vengeance, and I quote, "It is always the devil who prompts such harrying of the Church."

According to these two worthy followers of Wesley, the devil employs contrary ways to effect his foul end. He makes the minds of some Christians narrow, and he broadens others. Both ways operate to the destruction of "true religion and undefiled." Meanwhile, we presume, God sits up aloft enjoying the fun, knowing that everything is working according to plan and that all will come right at the finish of his tragi-comedy. We note that to both writer and critic the devil is a real personage. Apparently his Satanic Majesty has not been able to undermine this essentially Christ-like belief among the Methodist fraternity. But no doubt he is doing his damndest in this direction.

Dr. Jones, the Indian Road Christian, wants the Indians to accept Christ. And as he is not particular about converting the Hindoo or the Moslem, provided only that he will add Jesus to his pantheon, there will be plenty of temples and mosques where they will boast that Jesus has been taken in (and possibly "done for"). Incidentally, the Jones desire has led to an unexpected revelation. In late years there has been a lot of talk and even some action in the direction of sectarian "mergers." No Freethinker would be surprised at the justification of Christianity—it will come some day as Charles Bradlaugh once predicted. But it is delayed through the mutual hate which Christian sectarianism has always encouraged . . . and as a by-product these persistent divisions have often proved of real value to secular progress and liberty.

"Since no man was ever yet wise enough to see the whole truth about anything," says a writer, "there is no discredit in being willing to listen to the ideas of others." These essentially Freethought sentiments be dangerous notions to disseminate among the generality. Many readers may be sound Christians; and, if they are wondering why the great Exemplar of Christian tolerance never encouraged such notions, the Churches may lose clients. We may as well mention that willingness to listen to the ideas of others, presupposes that these others have complete freedom to voice their ideas. And if this inflammable notion should occur to the aforesaid Christian readers, they may also wonder why they have never heard it mentioned by the Church they patronize. For their benefit we add that the explanation is simple enough. Christ never advocated freedom of thought and speech for all men. In his view, anyone who obstinately dared to differ from him was working against God. The Churches have stuck tight to this view ever since.

here observing the Churches. In the American *Congregationalist*, he suggests that the work of the British preachers is made easier than that of American, because the British Press is more respectful, and is largely made so by a public opinion which would not tolerate unjust ridicule of sacred things. What Mr. Cooper might more truthfully have said is, that the British Press is more timid and more time-serving where the Churches are concerned. The unwritten rule among British journalists, is that circulation must not be allowed to suffer by the printing of forth-right criticism of religious ideas. To the extent to which this helps the parsons, to the same extent it hinders mental progress and the incidence of something nearer to real civilization.

Film Weekly has been laughing at the *Sunday Express* film critic, who has been screaming about the deplorable state of morals in British film studios. *Film Weekly* says that a generation or two ago the predecessors of this critic were focussing their attention on the stage. "Chorus girl" was a description at the sound of which the blood of every really nice girl was expected to curdle. That a virtuous woman could think of being an actress was as absurd a proposition as that an actress could possibly be virtuous. All this, says our contemporary, is seen nowadays to have been an absurdity. And we laugh at our forefathers for their gullibility as well as for the hypocrisy that led them to assume so much more virtue than they really desired to possess. But nowadays the actress is universally regarded as a hard-working, self-respecting, and self-supporting individual, as respectable as the typist.

Since, says *Film Weekly*, the stage has acquired a reputation for virtue, the Press moralists were without a target, until the Film arose just when the stage could no longer be used as a peg of moral indignation without which no really up-to-date newspaper can maintain its self-respect and its circulation. So the film studio, instead of the stage, becomes the ante-room of Hades.

A religious weekly has been praising the Tavistock Square (London) Clinic, where children suffering from functional nervous disorders are treated by modern psycho-therapeutic methods. Our contemporary says that children with anti-social habits respond to treatment when it is discovered that they are victims of some maladjustment, or some deficiency in the secretion of the pituitary gland. So many anti-social habits, our contemporary adds, are the direct outcome of diseased and disordered minds or bodies. Our pious friend really ought not to broadcast anti-Christian truths of this kind. If Christian people are told that anti-social conduct—what the Church calls "sin"—originates in physical or mental maladjustment or in gland deficiency, they may start wondering what truth there is in the Church's antique tales about "sin" and temptation by a Devil. We suppose it hasn't yet occurred to our friend that, what the world wanted, was not a bloody sacrifice on the Cross to save men from "sin," but simply some information about medical psychology. God has been withholding this knowledge from man for nearly 2,000 years. Yet, if only he had vouchsafed it earlier, a vast amount of human misery might have been prevented, and the world could have dispensed with the Vicarious Sacrifice.

The following item is taken from a Sunday school weekly:—

Prof. Carmargo, who has recently been appointed director of general religious education in Mexico, is giving all his time at present to Sunday school work, because religious education in the day schools is prohibited by the Government. The Government, however, is sympathetic to the Sunday school movement.

Since the Mexican Government disapproves of religion in connexion with education, we presume the pious professor's office is one set up by some Protestant Church or

The Rev. Harold Cooper, an American, has been over

Churches, and has nothing to do with the State. If this be the fact of the matter, the notice about the appointment is deliberately misleading.

"What a ridiculous sight!" said a lady in my hearing, the other day. The ridiculous sight was a man dressed in "pearlies," with a boy dressed to match. It is all a question of habit and education. The same people that consider it ridiculous for a man to wear a coat emblazoned with pearl buttons, will crowd to the spectacle of a court ceremonial where men are dressed in funny cocked hat, and feathers, and a costume to match. Or they will describe as profoundly impressive a High Church or Roman Catholic procession, in which the Bishops, Cardinals, and other ecclesiastical odds and ends resemble nothing else in the world so much as the clowns, pantaloons, and harlequins of a pantomime.

In *Now and Then*, a publication by Messrs Jonathan Cape, Ltd., Mr. J. Middleton Murry has a review of *The Life of John Keats*, by Albert Erlande. The notice is one of frank praise, and a notable passage by Mr. Murry is worth recording. Keats was as pagan as Milton in *Comus*, and taking into consideration his period, he stretched his life to the utmost views that were far in advance of his time. Mr. Murry writes: "Death we do not know; yet if we may guess at its secret, perhaps it is that all men 'die easy' at the last." In the history of Christianity it will be found that this religion has always stressed the wrong things; if life was wretched then there was always the beautiful life beyond. If any vestige of happiness was to be found in the brief existence of mortals, then it was the punishment of hell-fire to come. It traded on the fears of the unknown, and death was an easy first. From Mr. Murry we get a confirmation of the colossal imposture on the strength of "perhaps." Mr. Murry is not altogether right, for the ingenuity of Christian nations in devising weapons of war, the divine appointment of disease, all tend to make a human being's departure from this life as horrible as possible. But it is encouraging to see that Mr. Murry has cut adrift from one of the bogies of Christianity: in time he may drop all of them and help others to follow his example.

Mr. John Van Drueten, a young dramatist and author of *Young Woodley*, has stated that the English theatre was twenty years behind contemporary thought. This is true, and quite easy to understand. When organized religion has had a finger in the pie of censorship it is only natural that ideas should only be allowed to be expressed that suited the book of such dashingly daring young lads as the Bishop of London. Mr. Drueten has only to become a subscriber to the *Freethinker* to see where the real fight for intellectual freedom takes place.

The other day Lord Hugh Cecil brought the question of slavery before one of the Commissions of the League of Nations. It appears that Abyssinia is the chief sinner, where, it is said, there are two million of slaves, and where slaves are treated very badly. It is only necessary to add, which naturally Lord Cecil did not add, that Abyssinia is one of the oldest of Christian nations, and has never found anything in the Bible which forbade it to hold slaves. It needs some of our apologists out there to explain that the texts authorizing the holding of slaves, with St. Paul's injunction to slaves to be obedient to their masters, really means that slavery is very strictly forbidden.

There was one occasion when all but one of the followers of Jesus left him. In the case of his reincarnation, Krishnamurti, it is the other way about. The Theosophic incarnation of Jesus has left his disciples, because he is "anxious to appeal to a wider circle." He is said to be now living in palatial quarters in a castle in Holland, that was given him by one of his admirers. We wonder what Mrs. Besant thinks of the

reincarnated Jesus, who after all the trouble taken over him, prefers easy quarters in a castle to travelling about the world as a missionary. We fancy from what we have read, that Krishnamurti is what the Yankees call "slim."

There is a new movement on foot among Roman Catholics to make the Assumption of the Virgin a dogma which no Catholic may disbelieve. This will not trouble gentlemen like Mr. Belloc, for he has explained that no matter how unreasonable a thing may appear, if the Church has said he must believe it, then he believes it straight away. The Assumption of the Virgin means that her body was transported to heaven, and one of the evidences cited in favour of this is that no one has discovered her body on earth. Therefore runs the argument, it must be in heaven—which is the cock-eyed kind of reasoning that suits everyone who believes in Christianity—real Christianity.

Cardinal O'Connell told a gathering of teaching nuns in Boston, the other day, that no Catholic mother should be given absolution who sent her child to a Secular school. We fancy that is almost the rule everywhere where Catholics have control. And if anyone believes in Christianity—real Christianity, we cannot blame them for doing so. There is no sense in blaming a man for not being in robust health if he is eating impure food. Brutality in the name of kindness, and dishonesty in the name of morality are customary consequences where Christianity is concerned.

The Rev. H. J. Taylor, who has recently returned from Germany, finds that the Labour Movement is not merely outside the churches, but is definitely anti-church. But he finds that nowhere do the people work better, and nowhere are the "down and outs" better looked after. This is really not as it should be. According to all the principles laid down for ages by the Christian clergy, when people begin to drift away from Christianity they should be full of every kind of villiany and brutality. Something appears to have gone wrong somewhere.

It is said that 350,000 Catholics from different parts of Yorkshire and Lancashire and the Midlands celebrated Mass in the Thingwall Park, Liverpool. And yet there are those who talk of Christianity being dead? Many who talk in this way, we felt sure do it to excuse themselves not taking an active part in Freethought propaganda. One day of these days they may discover that Christianity, as an organization, has a deal of life in it yet.

From the *Christian Herald*, we learn that Anglicans and Free Churchmen in this country are preparing for a battle royal respecting a scheme of union drawn up by a joint committee of the Christian Churches in South India. The "battle," we gather, concerns highly important matters such as episcopal succession, offices of bishops, ordination of ministers, and the "laying on of hands." Onward, Christian soldiers!—God is helping both sides. So someone ought to win.

English Catholics have been rejoicing over emancipation from the kind of restrictions of which their Church was the pioneer in regard to other Christian sects. This is a timely occasion to remind our readers that we, with their help, are working for a far greater and nobler emancipation—the emancipation of the human intellect, not only from Catholic and Protestant "truth," but also from divinely inspired "truth" of every kind.

A man may not be able to express what he means; in that case he will utter an untruth even where he means truth, and as an artist he will be a bungler in spite of all inner visions.—Count Hermann Keyserling.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

FREETHINKER ENDOWMENT TRUST.—J.F.W., 10s.

D.P.S.—We fancy your analysis of the gentleman is substantially sound. He appears to be a bit of a crank, but we confess to a liking for the species. It is refreshing to find someone who is a little less sheep-like that are about ninety-five per cent of the population.

A. B. MOSS.—Pleased to know that your holiday is doing you good. Keep it up.

H. RAWLINGS.—We cannot say with certainty why *The Controversailist* ceased publication. The publication was a success from the first issue. But we suspect religious influences in the background. Probably it was felt that Mr. Chapman Cohen had to be suppressed at all costs. We rather fancy that if we offered the *Freethinker* to the Christians, with an undertaking never to start another paper, it would realize a good price. If a properly representative man could be found we should have no hesitation in continuing the discussion in these columns.

F. PARTINGTON.—Mr. Chapman Cohen has lectured in Huddersfield on several occasions, and, we think, in the Victoria Hall.

E.B.S.—You do not give the name or the date of the paper to which the cutting sent belongs. Is it of recent date. We do not see any indication of this on the cutting.

S. GREN.—The theory of emergence does not in the least run counter to the proposition that the result is the product of its factors; it merely says that the product, as such is different from each in some of the qualities displayed. That is a consequence of the synthesis effected. The "laws of matter" apply to matter. Other phenomena have their own peculiar laws in virtue of their differences.

P. W. CONNOR.—Letter held over till next week—usual reason.

J. SUTHERLAND.—You are mistaken in thinking that we do not think it well to issue propagandist tracts and leaflets. We have been doing it all our life. But there are some forms of belief that are to-day too absurd to argue seriously against.

and the courts, which used to be the Englishman's last refuge against administrative tyranny, rendered helpless. Some judges have already commented very strongly on this development, and we hope that some very strong stand will be made against this form of governmental anarchism. To call it, law, is absurdity. There is no law where an official order may make this or that legal. The practice was gaining ground before the war, but the war gave it an enormous impetus, and it has been growing rapidly since the war ended.

The strange thing is the way in which people submit without question to an official order. Here is one example. We have several times called attention to the way in which the police in provincial towns are arrogating to themselves the right of determining whether open-air meetings shall be held or not. The procedure is for an ordinary police constable to approach those who are conducting a meeting, and inquire whether there is a permit from the chief constable. If there is not the policeman forbids the meeting. Now this is a sheer usurpation. Save in special instances—the law forbidding meetings within a certain distance of Parliament, etc., enclosed spaces that are public property—there is no law against holding a public meeting in the open-air at any place, provided there is no obstruction, language inciting to a breach of the peace is not used, and no annoyance to the people who live in the immediate vicinity is caused. In either of these cases the onus of proof lies with the police, if action is taken.

We had a complaint recently that one open-air speaker had been dealt with in the usual manner and a permit demanded. We took the matter in hand by instructing, on behalf of the N.S.S., a solicitor to ask under what powers the police were acting. The reply took the form of the quite gratuitous information that the police had not the power to authorize anyone to cause an obstruction in the public streets, but as an act of courtesy the police might indicate a place at which meetings could be held where no obstruction would be likely. We did not require the first part of the letter, and the second part was a sheer evasion. The police have no such power as they had exercised. We advise all open-air speakers to follow the plan we always followed when engaged in open-air work. Work with the police where possible. If the police interfere, inquire on what ground the interference is attempted, get witnesses, as to what transpires, and then let matters take their course. The man who attempts a public meeting in, say, Ludgate Circus is a fool, but there are plenty of places where the police cannot well interfere. In any case Chiefs of police are not yet vested with the power of issuing permits for the exercise of public speaking.

The Liverpool Branch of the N.S.S. has arranged a very attractive course of lectures for their Autumn and winter season. There are four special lectures to take place in the Pieton Hall, and lectures on every other Sunday evening, from October 6 to March 30, in the Hall at 18 Colquitt Street. We hope the Branch will meet with the success it richly deserves, and that local friends will give both their moral and financial support.

We shall not be at all surprised to find some of our religious apologists impeaching non-religious science on the grounds of its hopeless outlook, because, in the course of time, "The denudations of a million million years will have reduced the mountains almost to plains, while seas and rivers will be frozen packs of ice, and the human race will be extinct." So says Sir James Jeans in his latest work, *The Universe Around Us* (Cambridge Press, 12s. 6d.), but we manage to view the impending disaster with tolerable equanimity. After all, a million million years gives sufficient time for one to settle one's affairs without undue haste, besides doing quite a lot of other things, while to fill in the odd moments we can think of no better and no more interesting way than reading the latest work of the Secretary of the Royal Society. Besides, a beginning and end to the universe, un-

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

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

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

Sugar Plums.

The *Daily Telegraph* has commenced publication of a series of articles by Lord Hewart, on "The New Despotism." The articles deal with growth of government by administrative order, in other words, at the whim of the official who happens to be in office. In practice it means that statute law may be circumvented,

less we particularize a special universe seems a quite unwarrantable suggestion, when, as is the case with Professor Jeans, all idea of Gods and creations, are set on one side. The process of degradation may go on, undoubtedly does go on, but it may yet be discovered that there are ways of reparation as well; and it is unwise to take the last advance in knowledge as final, as it is to say that our ignorance in this or that direction is irremovable.

Anyway, Sir James has written a fascinating volume, and has well achieved his purpose of writing a volume that shall make the present scientific conception of the universe "intelligible to readers with no special scientific knowledge"—the two chapters on "Exploring the Atom," and "Exploring the Universe," are models of clear expression, and cameo-like delineation. The first chapter may be commended to those who talk so much nonsense about the destruction of the atom. The whole work impresses one, not merely with the growth of knowledge concerning astronomy itself, but with the linking up of astronomy with other branches of knowledge. It is this fact that so widens the scope of Professor Jeans' survey that it becomes a useful introduction to the study of the whole of physical nature. He is one of those men who not merely know evolution, but think it. One ought not to take leave of the work without noting the absence of the clotted nonsense about the purpose of life, or of the universe, the working out of a plan, or of forces trying to achieve an end, etc., which disfigure the pages of so much that Professor Arthur Thomson, and Sir Oliver Lodge and other scientists write. Sir James is content to take the universe that our knowledge discloses to us, and he closes his survey on a note of sustained eloquence and hopefulness, thus:—

"As inhabitants of the earth we are living at the very beginning of time. We have come into being in the fresh glory of the dawn, and a day of almost unthinkable length stretches before us with unimaginable opportunities for accomplishment. Our descendants of far-off ages, looking down this long vista of time from the other end, will see our present age as the misty morning of the world's history; our contemporaries of to-day will appear as dim heroic figures who fought their way through jungles of ignorance, error, and superstition to discover truth, to learn how to harness the forces of nature, and to make the world worthy for mankind to live in. We are still too much engulfed in the greyneess of the morning mists to be able to imagine, however, vaguely, how this world of ours will appear to those who come after us and see it in the full light of day. But by what light we have, we seem to discern that the main message of astronomy is one of hope to the race and of responsibility to the individual—of responsibility because we are drawing plans and laying foundations for a longer future than we can well imagine.

We are asked to announce in connexion with Mr. Whitehead's open-air meetings on the Tynside, that he will visit Stanley on September 21, and on Sunday morning (the 22nd) will speak on the Sandhills, Newcastle-on-Tyne. The evening meeting will be on the Town Moor, at 6.30. On Monday and Tuesday evenings, at 7, he will be at the top of Windmill Hill, Gateshead. These are the first open-air meetings that have been held in Gateshead, and friends are specially invited to be present.

Apropos of our paragraph of Mr. Bernard Shaw's statement that he was asked to lecture at the Hall of Science, with a view to his being proposed as President of the N.S.S., and that it was only then that G. W. Foote, was elected, Mr. A. B. Moss, one of the oldest members of the Society, says that as contemporary of the period indicated he never heard any such story. As we said, the tale is absurd on the face of it. Mr. Shaw should keep his romances for occasions like "Saint Joan."

One good schoolmaster is of more use than a hundred priests.—Thomas Paine,

Dolet.

THE FREETHOUGHT MARTYR.*

RELIGION has had its martyrs, and so has Freethought. The path of progress has been drenched with blood and tears, and a world darkened by theology has been lightened by the fires of the stake. From Socrates drinking the poison-cup to the latest object of orthodox hate, history bears a long record of noble men and women who have died or suffered for humanity and truth.

Nothing, says Lecky, should impair the reverence with which we bow before the martyr's tomb. But there are martyrs and martyrs. The early Christians courted death at the hands of power; their eagerness to be immolated outstripped the cruelty of their persecutors. They were ready to perish miserably here in order to wear an imperishable crown of glory hereafter. They wished to make an infinitely profitable exchange, giving a few moments' pain for eternal bliss. They died not to save others but to save themselves, not for unfriended Truth but for a Deity with power to bestow matchless rewards. There is no martyrdom in that. But when a man who has no assurance of another life, and perhaps no belief in it, risks reputation, fortune, friendship, and life itself, in the pursuit and propagation of Truth; and rather than belie his conscience or stultify his manhood, dies a bitter death, and lays his all on the altar of man's highest hopes; then indeed there is a martyrdom at once pathetic and sublime.

Etienne Dolet, one of the martyrs of Freethought during the Renaissance, was hanged and burnt at Lyons in the year 1546, on his thirty-seventh birthday (August 3). The Church gave him the martyr's crown as a birthday present, and that was the only noble gift it could confer.

Several works have been written on Dolet in French, but nothing had appeared in English, until Mr. Christie published this monumental Biography, which shows, like Mr. Pollock's Spinoza, that we, as well as the Germans, can produce the finest fruits of profound and careful scholarship. Mr. Christie has devoted the leisure of eight years to his work, and as he can never expect any other payment for it, he should at least receive our heartiest gratitude. He has conferred an inestimable boon on all earnest students of literature, as well as on those who cherish the memories of the heroes and martyrs of progress. While highly impartial, he has performed his task as a labour of love, and done justice to one whom M. Boulmier has called "the Christ of Freethought."

Mr. Christie's research has been long and patient, and he has collected a vast quantity of interesting matter from obscure sources. Yet we are surprised to find that he makes no reference to the bibliophile Jacob's lengthy introduction to the works of Bonaventure Des Periers, in which there are several passages referring to Dolet, and many curious notes on the literary struggles of his time. Has it escaped Mr. Christie's notice, or does he think it useless? We can hardly conceive the latter, for Jacob (Paul Lacroix) is certainly an authority on the history of French literature, if on nothing else.

Although he is Chancellor of the Diocese of Manchester, Mr. Christie praises Rabelais and Voltaire, and the French Revolution with charming frankness. He writes of Voltaire as "the father of the Revolution in at least one, and that not the least beneficial of its aspects." And of the arch-heretic and the jolly Curé of Meudon, he writes: "Intense love of the human race, intense desire for its social and intel-

* Etienne Dolet, *The Martyr of the Renaissance*. A Biography. By R. C. Christie, Macmillan & Co.

lectual and moral progress, intense hatred of hypocrisy, bigotry, and superstition and ignorance, is to be found in both." Further on, in a footnote, he says:—

"Great as was the genius, many as were the virtues of Bossuet, I prefer the Christianity (or non-Christianity) of Voltaire to that of the Eagle of Meaux, nor can I forget that his beak and claws displayed themselves not only in the flights of his pulpit oratory or in his admirable denunciations of the variations of the Protestant Churches, but in the severe persecution of Fenelon, and in the warm approval which he gave to the revocation of the Edict of Nantes and the dragonnades of Languedoc."

And he describes Rabelais as "that great man, from whom a word of praise is itself sufficient to confer an immortality." It is very pleasant to find a serious and sober scholar, like Mr. Christie, confessing himself "a disciple of the divine Pantagruel." He is worthy to be a member of the Rabelais Club, and to consort with the choice spirits who compose it. He sees the splendid wisdom and humanity beneath the Master's buffoonery, and understands the meaning of Victor Hugo's great word about "irony incarnate for the salvation of mankind."

With regard to the Renaissance, Mr. Christie notices the sneer that it gave birth to nothing, and refutes it:—

"Surely this is not so. The Renaissance gave birth to mental freedom. It taught the true mode of looking at things and opinions. It revived the classical as opposed to the medieval method of thought. It examined things as they are, and opinions according to their absolute truth or falsehood, and not according as they are in accord or discord with authority and orthodoxy. It appealed *ab auctoritate ad rem*; and a system which was the parent of Erasmus and Rabelais, and a more remote ancestor of Moliere and Voltaire, cannot be called unfruitful or unworthy of attention, whatever be the value at which we appraise its fruits."

Mr. Christie then notices the hostility of the chief spirits of the Renaissance to Christianity, and says the fault was not theirs:—

"To each of them Religion, Christianity, and the Catholic Church represented as it could but represent, all that was odious, all that was opposed to freedom of thought, to freedom of action, all that in one aspect (the religious) was cruel and brutal, in another (the mundane) all that was degrading and immoral."

Even Bossuet, says Mr. Christie, "had no word of sympathy, apparently no thought, for the wretched and oppressed millions; in fact, as Vinet has remarked, "during all that triumphal era the people escape our search. For them, at least, the Church had no message." Such is the spirit in which Mr. Christie writes. Having recognized it, and given him thanks and praise for the result of his labours, we shall proceed to draw from it, for our readers, a brief narrative of Dolet's career, his struggles, his successes, his misfortunes, and his death.

Dolet was born at Orleans in the years 1509, probably on the 3rd of August, the day on which Saint Etienne's relics were "invented." Little is known of his parentage. One absurd story represents him as the natural son of Francis the First; but, as Mr. Christie observes, "at the date of Dolet's birth Francis, then Duke of Valois, was not quite fifteen years of age." Voulté, one of his enemies, says that his father died at the hands of the public executioner. This, however, is probably a slander. Dolet himself, says that his parents were "in no mean and low position," and that his father attained to civic honours. Both appear to have died while he was still young. Yet they, or other relations and friends, secured for him a liberal education. G. W. FOOTE,

(To be continued.)

Propaganda Work in Sweden.

A CORRESPONDENT was kind enough to suggest that my former articles might be of value to our Movement in indicating new approaches to old problems, so I venture with another short article dealing with the particular problem of the country that, long before the coming of the spoiler Christianity, had a wonderful *Weltanschauung* in its mythology, but which to-day is strictly (in all senses) Lutheran. The following is what my correspondent writes:—

There is only one movement in Sweden which is organized to combat religion. This organization is really a section of the world-wide proletariat Esperanto Association, and functions as such. There are no others, and there have been no other organized efforts in Sweden before this. The "Kommunist-Partei," of course, expects anti-religious attitudes from its members, but does not do any particular anti-religious work apart from its own political aims. La Social-Demokrat Partei, has capitulated to the forces of reaction, and is now actively engaged in pacifying and hunting the religious to increase its own ranks and power. Much the same game as is being played by the Labour Party in England. Naturally many ecclesiastics are to be found in its ranks, and the party even helps them actively to disseminate the poison of religion into the working classes. At the moment the Social Democratic Party is discussing the problem of founding a special social democratic paper, having the aim of capturing the religious for its political body. Besides this, the party already has one "apologetic" paper, by which it enters religious circles.

Our own organization is only some months old and is very small, and the obstacles to overcome are very great. Naturally our organization is mainly concerned with freeing the workers from the dope which the ecclesiastics are providing unceasingly to the workers.

The Communists have, I see at the last moment, begun to discuss the possibility of establishing a separate organization to unite not merely Esperantists, but every Freethinker in Sweden. Such an organization is certainly very necessary, as you can see from the list of our enemies: The State religion (Lutheran), Swedish Mission Association, Methodist Association, Baptist Association, The Pentikost Association (Pentecost whole-hoggers), Russel Association, Association of daughters of Ephraim and several other minor sects, and the Social Democratic Party, which has decided to fight any Free-thought tendency.

In Sweden the same customs as in England are in vogue where the State religious rules, for example in the Army. Every Sunday there is an obligatory service, and each evening a service is held in camp or in the barracks.

The religious forces have their own morning paper, *The Swedish Morning Post*, which, of course, is very reactionary, and against this and other periodicals we have the newly-founded, tiny but brave, *The New Freethinker*.
L. CORINNA.

A Prayer.

OH, God of kindness, love and care,
To whom 'tis said we are in debt,
I crave to give a present fair,
A present that you'd ne'er forget.

I saw to-day an idiot boy,
Condemned as helpless; mad and maimed.
No sun, no moon, no love, no joy
And you, O God, stand unashamed.

Throughout a glorious summer day,
Whilst you played castles with a cloud,
In lonely agony he lay,
Chattering incoherently and loud.

You lead some through a sunny way,
With naught of misery to tell—
The Fawning crowds who sing and Pray—
While some have left an idiot's Hell.

E.H.C.

"Christ—Man or God?"

[In a recent issue of a daily paper the Dean of Durham, Bishop Welldon wrote an article entitled "Christ—Man or God?" The article led to the following letter being sent, with a reply by the Bishop. We think our readers will be interested in the correspondence.—EDITOR.]

27th July, 1929.

The Rt. Rev. Bishop Welldon,
The Deanery,
Durham.

MY LORD BISHOP,

I have read with interest your article in the *Daily News* of last Saturday, "Christ—Man or God?" In this you say, "Why should these miracles be eliminated?" This is a question which I am sure you are putting in all sincerity, not only to other equally sincere men but to those who have given serious attention to the matter. Such a question, coming as it does, from a man in your position, that of a teacher, and published in a newspaper with a circulation of over a million, calls for a reply. I myself was brought up in the Christian faith, and it was only after many years of close study that I abandoned it. Among the very many reasons which led to this change was the impossibility of accepting as an historical fact the "Incarnation." Were the story of the Virgin Birth claimed solely by the Christian Church, it would at least stand out as something unique, but this has never been the case—as you surely must be aware. In *Symbolism in Relation to Religion, or Christianity, the Sources of its Teaching and Symbolism*, by James Ballantyne Hannay, published by Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., you will find an extensive list of Sons of God, Messiahs, Saviours born of a Virgin to Save Mankind, with their authorities, which include such names as Champollion, Renouf, Tacitus, Gibbon, Draper, Beale (Hist. Budd), The Vishnu Purana, Squire (Serpent Worship), The Shi-King Decade. Malcome (History of Persia), Faiths of Man. Marduk (Ency. Brit.), Mallet (Northern Antiquities), Kingsborough (Mexican Antiq.) and others. Besides these, each of whom has a full mythical history, just as Jesus has, there are hundreds of Gods, or Sons of God, who came down to earth to teach and save men, scattered through every part of the Old and New World, in the legends of every religion. The story of an infant god born of a virgin mother holds a prominent place in the ancient religions of Egypt, India, China, Chaldaea, Greece, Rome, Siam, Mexico, Peru and other nations. And this belief in virgins giving birth to offspring has persisted right down to modern times, both in civilized nations, as for instance, in the case of Joanna Southcott, and amongst savage tribes of which ample evidence is given in Frazer's *The Golden Bough*. You would I feel sure refuse to accept as true these countless claims—with one single exception. May I, in all sincerity, ask you WHY? Is there any special evidence which justified the acceptance of the virgin birth of Jesus as an historical fact—evidence which is wanting in other cases? Some cases no doubt date after the Christian Era, but very many preceded it by thousands of years (and indeed the same may be said of all the other features of Christianity). If all claims of Virgin Birth are to be ruled out of court, one may well ask, how can such beliefs have ever come into existence? I would suggest that in some or all of the following explanations may be found the key. As regards Joanna Southcott (in which no virgin birth was claimed) it may have been a case of abdominal dropsy, or a fibroid or other uterine growths. A post mortem was, I believe, held which put pregnancy out of court, but opinions differed as to the cause of her abnormal appearance. There are from time to time cases like that of Mrs. Russell, which was before the Courts some few years ago. Dr. Playfair (I think) certified that though pregnant she was also intacta. The lady in question was a married woman, and the medical evidence offered, explained quite satisfactorily her condition. Many savage tribes (see *The Golden Bough* and other works of a similar nature) have the haziest notion as to the cause of pregnancy. Were this not stated by

authorities of undoubted veracity, it would be impossible to believe some of the statements made on the subject. Frogs, trees, stones, and other inanimate objects are accredited with the power of human procreation. But in many other instances the belief in virgin birth has arisen out of symbolism.

For men such as the usual Salvation Army "Captain," or the Fundamentalist, want of opportunity to acquire knowledge is some justification for ignorance. The same may be said for those whose religious tenets make even the very commencement of individual thought, to say nothing of investigation, an unpardonable sin. But this does not apply to those who, well aware that evidence is at hand on all sides, evidence offered by well-informed men of the highest moral standing, yet willfully shut their mind and continue to teach that which, if they were intellectually honest men, they could not but help knowing to be untrue.

Now comes the tragedy. There are many Christian clergymen who at the commencement of their careers did truly believe all they had been taught. But in the course of years, reading and thought have revolutionized their beliefs. Often with wives and young children entirely dependent on them, with no private means nor such knowledge as would enable them to earn a livelihood in any other calling, what are such men to do. In some cases they say, "It matters little what one believes, all that counts is, how one acts. Most people are incapable of reasoning for themselves. If you destroy their present beliefs, beliefs which have a real effect on their daily actions ("the creed," which to use your own words, "is sufficient both for life and death") "you can offer them nothing better, that is to say, nothing which we are capable of understanding, and therefore likely to have an ethical effect on their lives." Unlike the Robert Elsmere of fiction, who had a good private fortune, for such clergy to be really honest means destitution, ruin for themselves and those nearest and dearest to them. As an anodyne, some lead unselfish blameless lives and devote their existence to putting into practice the Sermon on the Mount, thus becoming veritable blessings to mankind. They are, alas! but few. You have doubtless met such.

I think I have now answered your question. May I in turn ask you one? During the past half century there has been a marked change in the attitude of well-read laymen and clergy towards the basic doctrines of the church—a change that is all in one direction. Contemporary with this change of thought has gone a marked diminution in crime and all anti-social acts (though less than might have been expected). In view of these facts, how is it possible for the Church to maintain a cast-iron, inflexible attitude towards tenets which even the ill-informed "man in the street" finds impossible to accept?

I am,

My Lord Bishop,

Yours faithfully,

ERNEST PORTER.

BISHOP WELLDON'S REPLY.

DEAR SIR,

I beg to thank you for having taken the trouble of writing me so long a letter. There are, as I think, only two possible views respecting our Lord's personality; one is that He was a Being higher than man who became man; then His Incarnation, as it is called, is itself the greatest of all miracles, and it imports at least the possibility of other miracles in His life. It is not perhaps necessary that I should define the word miracle. Augustine's definition that a miracle is not contrary to Nature but contrary to man's present knowledge of Nature is, I think, as sound as any which has yet been given. The other view is that He was only man. But then the claims which He makes for Himself are in my judgment inconsistent with Humanity. A man who is immune from sin, who can forgive sins, who is one with His Father in Heaven, who offers rest to all the weary and heavy laden sons of earth, who possesses all power in Heaven and earth, and who will one day be the Judge of all the living and the dead, is, if His claims are true, no mere man.

I admire all persons, who without any basis of the Christian faith, are seeking in their daily lives to fulfil the Christian moral law; but they are not Christians in the sense in which the Church has always understood the word "Christian." It is our Lord's prerogative of Divine powers and His resolute unwillingness to use those powers in His own behalf which has made so irresistible an appeal to the heart of humanity.

Believe me,
Most faithfully yours,
J. E. C. WELLDON.

E. Porter, Esq.

A Tribute.

As one who grew up in a Christian atmosphere and environment wherein everything that smacked of Free-thought was suppressed and condemned, but who afterwards joined the ranks of those who stood for liberty of thought and speech for reasons, and under circumstances which space forbids me to set out in this contribution, I wish to express my appreciation of the inestimable yeoman service rendered by the *Freethinker* in unfettering the masses from the shackles of superstition, and divesting their minds of a multitude of despicable and terrorizing religious ideas, and to avow my gratitude for the knowledge and information regularly imparted to me by its articles.

The *Freethinker*, which is indubitably the only outspoken Freethought journal in the British Empire, can vaunt its articles as being on a par with those of any other journal devoted to the enlightenment of the people on multifarious questions of importance and interest, and can pride itself on its brilliant galaxy of contributors among whom may be mentioned the editor—Mr. Chapman Cohen, who seems to be peerless in his lucidity of style and logical reasoning—Messrs. Cutner, Moss, Mann, Dodd, Reeves, Mimmermus, Keridon, Lamel and others, each of whom writes articles intensely stimulating and instructive and devoid of what I would term "school-astic snobbery" and equivocations, and for that reason they appeal to the average layman even though the latter may not always be in full accord with everything written in them. On that account too, the *Freethinker* should be utilized more for propaganda work.

Occasionally, opponents and so-called Freethinkers rail at the journal because its writers happen to declare openly what they regard as true and right, and because they hit straight and do not care to mince matters with the "meek and mild" Christians. These people seem to think that the *Freethinker* is intolerant merely because they are apt to confuse the terms "criticism" and "intolerance." According to them the *Freethinker* must treat its subscribers to "kindergarten" stories, and tell them that although Jesus cursed a fig-tree he is not such a bad sort after all; and although Christianity has been an utter fiasco in moral and social reform since its inception centuries ago, there is, nevertheless, something good and attractive about it; something mysterious which has at times a beneficial effect on our depraved human nature. Unless it does this, it is intolerant. Microbes are pernicious things which we combat in our daily lives, but hermaphroditic Freethinkers and ovine-minded believers presumably hold that microbes should sometimes be allowed some free-play because they may destroy some undesired human being, especially those Freethinkers who have the courage to announce openly from the platform and in the press, what their convictions are.

Now and again opponents of the journal make an incursion into its columns with the obvious intention of pulverizing the arguments of its contributors. The result usually, is that they show up their own ignorance on the matter, which is the subject of argumentation, or their own ratiocinations are so destitute of logic, that devoting an article to them would be sheer waste of time and energy.

I am convinced that what I have written represents the opinion of thousands who are staunch Freethinkers, many of whom, I take it, are not in a position to participate directly in Freethought propaganda, but who have a warm feeling for the Movement, and admire the role

acted by the *Freethinker*. May this journal enjoy a longevity until the efforts of the Freethought Movement have been crowned with success, and may the editor and other contributors remain in such sound health as will enable them to carry on their invaluable work with the same unremitting vigour as hitherto.

Transvaal.

D. MATTHEWS.

Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SOUTHWELL AND ROBERTSON.

SIR,—May I be allowed to set down, for just what it is worth, my disagreement with Mr. V. B. Neuburg's strictures on the treatment of Charles Southwell, by J. M. Robertson. There is nothing in the article to rebut the statement that Southwell was unstable. He was admittedly quarrelsome; he was foolish enough to make his article on "The Jew Book" unnecessarily offensive, and he apparently was in the service of Methodism and Freethought at the same time. Many Freethinkers are unfortunately inveterate hero-worshippers: a Southwell starts an Atheistic publication with the circulation of a few hundred, a mere drop in the ocean of national thought, and the tendency is to think that the whole mental world was balanced on his weekly output. He may have been "a marvellous debater," but even then, in the sum total of a century of English Freethought, a couple of paragraphs might well be a just and generous meed of recognition. And doing time for Freethought does not necessarily mean giving it a lift.

Mr. Neuburg's *obiter dicta* are interesting. That J.M.R. is master of "a sound if seldom sparkling prose," is amusing in so far as it is apparently put down by way of another whack at the defamer of Southwell. As Robertson does not claim to be a literary artist, belittling his writing has no other effect than shedding a little light on Mr. Neuburg. And the charge that Robertson in the *History of Freethought* is biased on the side of Respectability is best met with a plain denial. The shade of hypocrisy which hangs round the idea of "Respectability" cannot truthfully be attached to him, any more than it can be said that, as between Mr. Neuburg and the historian, "the interests of justice and of truth and of honour" are in better keeping in the hands of the former.

H. B. DODDS.

CAN A RATIONALIST BE A POET?

SIR,—It has amused me during the past few years—my gradual weaning from Christianity and Occultism having only led to a change in my literary output since about my fortieth birthday—to see verses of mine contemporaneously in your pages and in those of journals so far opposed to your views as *Great Thoughts* and *The Leisure Hour*. Correspondents ask me how it is possible to fight in two camps?

But one is not fighting in two camps at all? The writer of rhymes stands or falls by the literary content of what he creates, quite apart from his technique. If I tell the Truth, as I conceive the truth; describe Beauty, as I behold beauty; express Aspiration, as I feel aspiration; and do all this to the best of my poetic ability, it is a matter of complete indifference to me whether my work appeals to Christian, Freethinker or Oculist. I have spoken from my heart—if the heart of another mortal responds, then my message is humanitarian. That is enough "spiritual" compensation.

Yet how curious it is that we should argue whether a poet (I do not put myself among even second-rate poets, be it understood!) believes in the Godhead or not. Could anything to-day be more absurd than the old statement that an undevout astronomer is unthinkable! Why, our greatest brains to-day are "rationalistic" to a man (or woman)! Only social cowardice, or consideration for relations and friends, holds back an open avowal of the fact. Thanks be, this fear of social reprisals is slowly but surely being dissipated, as we learn more of the universe about us!

J. M. STUART-YOUNG,

Onitsha, Nigeria.

A QUESTION.

SIR,—Can any reader state if it is true, and if so, where it can be verified that the Servian who killed the Austrian Arch Duke just previous to the late war, was said to have been so incensed by Austria's forcing upon Servia a thousand Roman Catholic priests, and their upkeep, and that the murder was in resentment of the indignity forced upon Servia against her wish?

CURIOUS.

Society News.

MR. G. WHITEHEAD addressed seven meetings in various parts of Glasgow. The four meetings held at Regent's Street were well attended, and at the opening one the drunks were well in evidence at question time, but good order prevailed and the lectures were appreciated. A meeting held at Partick, on new territory, proved to be more interesting than that of a rural orator whose audience deserted him when our platform opened. None of the fanaticism usually displayed on a new pitch this time was in evidence.

The Sunday evening meeting was advertised for Queen's Park, but others having a prior claim, we moved to a street opposite and failed to attract a crowd. We then tried Alexandra Park, where after still another change of pitch we succeeded in getting a good meeting. But the most satisfactory meeting was held at Paisley, a place unfamiliar with outdoor Freethought meetings, and was so successful that we decided to have several more the following week. The Scots fondness for argument kept our speaker exceptionally busy all the week.

Mr. Whitehead, on September 21, commences a week's work in the Newcastle area, the opening meeting at Stanley.

REPORT OF LECTURES IN N.E. LANCASHIRE.

MEETINGS have been well attended during the past week, much interest being shown. At Higham, on Monday, a local preacher came forward in opposition, and feeling in the crowd ran high.

At the Padiham and Oswaldtwistle meetings nothing unusual happened, but at Crawshawbook, on Friday, a good deal of interruption was given by a middle-aged woman. She afterwards stood by our speaker and commenced to sing ("There is a fountain filled with blood") trying to get the crowd to join in. We nipped this effort in the bud, and made the lady rather sorry for her vocal effort.

At our second meeting, on Sunday, at Accrington, a local Methodist parson twice took the platform, and as an outcome a public debate has been arranged for September 29.—J.C.

Obituary.

MR. FRED COLLINS.

ON Thursday, September 12, the remains of Fred Collins were buried in the City of London Cemetery, Ilford.

As an active Freethinker he preferred the unbeaten track, and in a quiet unassuming way did valuable work for the Cause.

Death, at the comparative early age of fifty-four, was due to Pneumonia following Bronchitis after a week's illness.

He leaves a widow and three married children, to whom we offer sincere sympathy.

A large number of friends gathered at the graveside, where a Secular service was conducted by R. H. Rosetti.

Moncure Conway Memorial Lecture.

MR. LAURENCE HOUSMAN

will deliver the TWENTIETH LECTURE

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the title being

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SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

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

LONDON.

INDOOR.

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1): 11.0, John A. Hobson, M.A.—"Nationalism, the Barrier to Human Progress."

THE NON-POLITICAL METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (The Orange Tree, Euston Road, N.W.1): September 26, at 101 Tottenham Court Road, Social and Dance, 7.30 to 11.30. Admission 1s.

OUTDOOR.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 12.30, Mr. James Hart, 3.30, Messrs. E. Betts and B. A. Le Maine; 6.30, Messrs. A. H. Hyatt and B. A. Le Maine. Freethought meetings every Wednesday at 7.30, Messrs. C. 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 Gates, Bayswater Road.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Ravenscourt Park, Hammersmith): 3.30, Mr. Charles Tuson.

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

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

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

FULHAM AND CHELSEA BRANCH N.S.S. (corner of Shorrolds Road, North End Road): Saturday, 8.0 p.m.; Effie Road, opposite Walham Green Station, Sunday 8.0 p.m.

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

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. L. Ebury—A Lecture.

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

MR. F. EGERTON STAFFORD, President, Liverpool (Merseyside) Branch, will lecture on "Secular Education," at the Dingle Joint Co-operative Guild, 300 Park Road, Dingle, Liverpool, on Tuesday, 24 September at 8.30 p.m. Members of the Merseyside Secular Education Committee will be allowed to attend.

OUTDOOR.

LIVERPOOL (Merseyside) BRANCH N.S.S. (Beaumont Street): Monday, September 23, at 7.30, Mr. J. V. Short—A Lecture. Tuesday, September 24, at 8.0, Edge Hill Lamp, Mr. P. Sherwin—A Lecture.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE BRANCH N.S.S.—Mr. George Whitehead's mission commences Sunday, September 22, at 11.15, at the Sandhill. Sunday evening, at 6.30, Town Moor. Monday and Tuesday evenings, at 7.0, Top of Windmill Hills, Gateshead. Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, at 7.30, at the Bigg Market, Newcastle.

GLASGOW BRANCH N.S.S.—Ramble to Ben Lomond. Alexander's Bus leaving Cathedral Street. Saturday at 9.15 p.m. to Drymen.

Miscellaneous Advertisements.

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SHAW DESMOND

the well-known Novelist

AT

Caxton Hall, Westminster

ON

Friday, October 25th, 1929

at 7 p.m.

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

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