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Views and Opinions.

G. K. Chesterton on Atheism.

Mr. G. K. CHESTERTON would be much more amusing than he actually is, if one did not feel that he was forcing himself to humour. For humour to be completely good must be spontaneous. It should grow out of the subject, and not be obviously dragged in. Moreover, by this time his peculiar form of humour has become so familiar that it tends to become monotonous. It reminds one of the retort of the nigger who had been listening to another fellow blackguarding him. When the other ceased, he got in a retort that was distinctly Chestertonian. Said he, "All dem tings you say I is, you am." When an Atheist says that a Christian is bigoted, Mr. Chesterton retorts by saying that the Atheist is narrow and cramped in his views. If a teetotaler enlarges on the evils of drink, Mr. Chesterton replies by saying that the teetotaler should cultivate sobriety and not go in for an immoderate use of lemonade. To the man who says that Christianity is a gloomy creed, he writes on the lack of jollity in unbelief. Take away this kind of thing and you have deleted a great deal of Mr. Chesterton's humour—at least, so far as it applies to serious essays. In other directions he shows greater versatility, but with these other directions I am not now concerned.

* * *

That Atheist.

Perhaps the best exhibition of Mr. Chesterton's sense of humour was that after turning himself into a Roman Catholic he set himself up as a champion in its behalf. I do not imagine for a moment that the leaders of the Church in England set any great value upon him as a theologian, but he is well known, he has many friends on the press—that means much nowadays, and the Church has doubtless found him valuable as a publicity agent. In the Roman Catholic celebrations Mr. Chesterton's part was that of delivering an address in the Albert Hall, to a "Men's

demonstration" on "The Emancipation of the Atheist." We have not the slightest doubt but that Mr. Chesterton would be delighted to emancipate the Atheist—the word is evidently used in a generic and not in an individual sense—since that would deserve as big a statue as that of St. Peter in Rome. And what a triumph that would be! To do what all the Christian Churches have signally failed to do with their weapons of bribery, coercion and threats, would indeed be a feather in his cap. He would deserve as big a statute as that of St. Peter's in the cathedral at Rome. But Mr. Chesterton is cautious in his wisdom. It is easy to emancipate an Atheist before a Roman Catholic audience. Mr. Chesterton has the wisdom never to attempt the feat under conditions where the Atheist is able to talk back to the audience.

So Mr. Chesterton, before his Catholic crowd ran true to form. His humour was as sparkling as ever—that is, it had the same sparkle as ever. The Atheist is difficult to emancipate (convert) because he is "of all men the most narrow and the most completely captive. He is entirely and completely imprisoned and surrounded by prejudice. He is limited even in his gestures. He cannot kneel. He is a cramped human being." There it is! It is the nigger over again—"All dem tings you say I is, you am." Mr. Chesterton's Roman Catholic hearers must have roared with delight—if they were not stricken dumb by the revelation that they were of all men the most completely free, and the freest from prejudice. If one could imagine such an unprecedented thing as a Roman Catholic being permitted to hear the case against his beliefs, it might have been pointed out that it is a case of a man who has just recovered the use of his limbs being lectured by an incurable cripple on the benefit of crutches and the glory of being freed from dependence upon mere legs. The Atheist knows Mr. Chesterton's case from A to Z, while Mr. Chesterton, as a Roman Catholic is not allowed to even read the other side—unless he gets absolution for having done so. Really, one cannot argue with statements such as those put forward by Mr. Chesterton. They are protected by their own absurdity.

* * *

The Fruits of Religion.

When Mr. Chesterton drops his alleged humour and attempts being serious he actually borrows the Atheist's thunder in order to attack a certain type of non-Christian. When he does not do this, but attempts a criticism of Atheism on his own, he is childishly fallacious. For example, he tells us that there are not many people nowadays who call themselves Atheists. I venture to say there are probably more to-day who call themselves Atheists than ever there were, although I do not think that in this country the number who publicly proclaimed themselves as such was ever very great. The lack of moral courage

displayed by men and women in proclaiming their true opinions about religion is to be deplored. But who is to blame for that? The ordinary man or woman is not out for martyrdom, of even the mild type that involves being looked down upon by their neighbour; and certainly they will not face the kind that involves loss of business, slander, or actual physical punishment. Being brought up in a society impregnated with Christian influences, they are inclined to look at every question from the point of immediate personal gain, and so long as the society in which they are living says that one must pay a price for speaking out one's real opinions, hypocrisy will be the general rule. Mr. Chesterton should reflect that his own church, the church which has given him such glorious freedom, for many centuries took hold of the bravest and the most fearless thinkers and eliminated them. It said to the people, we forbid you, first of all, to practice independent thinking about religion, we will tell you what to believe, and, as Mr. Chesterton's friend, Mr. Belloc, has said, once the Church has told Catholics what to believe, they must just believe it without question. The Roman Church did what it could to make it impossible for the independent thinker to live. It said in effect that a man might disbelieve in Christianity and live, but only on the condition that he maintained an outward conformity and lived like a good, sanctimonious, religious hypocrite. The Protestant Churches carried on the tradition, and Mr. Chesterton says that few people call themselves Atheists! If Mr. Chesterton wishes people to live honest, intellectual lives, he might attempt something that will make it possible for them to do so. Meanwhile, it is left for the stronger characters only to show themselves in their true colours. For manufacturing moral cowards and intellectual hypocrites, no institution in the world can hold a candle to the Christian Church.

Borrowed Thunder.

On the other hand, when Mr. Chesterton borrows the Atheist's thunder he becomes quite reasonable. He says:—

They found a general disposition amongst anti-Christians and leaders of their time to dodge the issue. They did not call themselves Atheists, and what was more, they were far less logical and courageous and consistent than the Atheist. They used terms perfectly meaningless. They talked about believing in a purpose in things, and then told you they did not believe in a person in whom the purpose resides.

The rebuke is deserved. I do not know how far it would be correct to describe men like Mr. Wells, or Professor Julian Huxley as anti-Christians, and I feel sure they would not welcome the description, although in France or elsewhere on the Continent they would be described as Atheists, and would accept the description. But they certainly have no authority to speak on behalf of definite Freethought, nor is Mr. Chesterton justified in taking them as representative. I agree entirely with him that nothing could be more ridiculous than to talk of a purpose in life or nature, without believing in some person from whom the purpose emanates; and it would be almost an insult to the intelligence of some of those who thus talk of purpose, without a person, of thinking they do not see the absurdity of their statement. But, as I have said, the intellectual timidity developed by Christianity has bitten very deeply, and this manifests itself quite as much among public men as among private individuals. "Atheist" leaves no room for misunderstanding—so far as religion is concerned—it permits no equivocation, and no compromise. It leaves a

man in open and avowed antagonism to all forms of religious belief, and there are very few who have the courage to so expose themselves. They adopt one of a dozen different names that will help to cloak the true state of their minds, and in the end manage to fool themselves as well as other people. And they can always say, in effect, to the Christian, "If you want anyone to kick, there is that unshamed Atheist. Bad as I am, I am not so bad as he." I can no more imagine purpose wandering about the world without any person to belong to, than can Mr. Chesterton. It is an intellectual monstrosity. The real god in whom these people believe is the god of respectability, they are examples of that intellectual toadyism which must live within touch of established orthodoxy, even if it is not a full member of the magic circle. We do not envy such people being looked down upon—with justification—by a hoo-doo worshipping member of the Roman Church.

The Christian Crawl.

But Mr. Chesterton soon returns to his native absurdities. The Atheist is in a state of terror because his world of "matter" is falling to pieces. "The atom has gone out of physical science." This is really not a case for argument, but only for tuition. If Mr. Chesterton will inquire of some competent scientific friend, he will discover that the atom is as much in physical science as ever it was, and matter is just as real as ever it was. A shilling text-book would set him right on such matters. The atom and matter are no more destroyed by our changed conceptions of them, than the dropping of the French franc from tenpence in English money to about twopence-halfpenny has wiped the franc out of existence. I would like to advise him to read my own *Materialism Re-stated*, but I am afraid than in his glorious freedom he would have to get a dispensation to do so, or tell the tale of his misbehaviour when next he goes to confession, and face the consequences.

I wonder whether Mr. Chesterton has ever read a passage of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, in which he said that not one man in a thousand had either the strength of mind or goodness of heart to be an Atheist. Coleridge was not an Atheist himself, but he was able to see through all the piffling talk about the fear and weakness of Atheism, and to recognize that whether Atheism was intellectually justifiable or not, it did take some strength of mind to reach Atheism and some moral courage to avow it. Anyone can be a Christian; anyone can believe in a God. It needs no greater degree of intelligence than is required to believe in ghosts than goblins to believe in some master goblin of them all. And never was there born a man who was too poor a character to go crawling to the foot of the cross to be saved from a hell that was born of the very ignorance and terror from which he was himself suffering. The poorer the character the easier the conversion. "Come to me and I will give you rest," says Mr. Chesterton's Church. Exactly. "Come to me and I will do your thinking for you, I will take care of your character, I will save you from the consequences of your wrongdoing, I will save you from the fires of hell." Does it really require a lofty character to be attracted by this kind of thing? Listen to the typical Christian on his knees, and think of the mixture of grovel and grab it is! "Oh Lord, I am nothing, less than nothing, I can do nothing of myself, so please give, give, give"; and the more complete the abasement the more "saintly" the person. Does it require a superior character to be a Christian? The best answer is to be found in the records of converted murderers, of wife-beaters and drunkards, of the

large number whose professions of belief is motivated by no higher ambition than to make for themselves the most of both worlds.

The curious thing is that men like Mr. Chesterton have not the wit to see that their very indictment of Atheism is largely in terms of the superiority of Atheism over religion. There is no reason for loving anything, says Mr. Chesterton, save belief in God. There it is! The old Pauline teaching that if there be no resurrection from the dead, then let us eat, drink, and be merry for to-morrow we die. The Christian is genuinely astounded that men should conduct themselves decently if there is no reward for it in an after-life. There is nothing in the ties of friend or family, country or race, worth bothering about if there is no god to reward or punish. Remove the incentive of heaven and the fear of God, they say, and you destroy every reason for good conduct. Well, there may be a great deal of happiness in this view of life, but it is the joy of the thieves' kitchen and the glee of the insane ward.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

The Gentle Art of Happiness.

"What damned error, but some sober brow
Will bless it and approve it with a text."

Shakespeare.

"If I had been a bishop, with an income of five to fifteen thousands a year, I should have had an inexhaustible source of rejoicing and merriment in the generosity, if not in the credulity, of my countrymen."

John Bright.

Just as company-promoters promise fat dividends in the persuasive prospectuses they issue to the public, so priests promise happiness to their clients. There is also another point of resemblance. The financier promises dividends later on, and the priest promises happiness after death, but both insist that cash is paid now. Business, however, is bad, and money is hard to get. So the company-promoters search the dictionaries for alluring language, and priests turn secularist for half an hour in order to bolster the claims of an alleged supernatural faith.

No less a personage than a Bishop of the State Church has been "trying it on the dog" in the columns of a daily newspaper. Dr. Bertram Pollock, Bishop of Norwich, has been discoursing on "The Really Happy Man." Not, mark you, the ordinary happy individual, but the "really" happy man. The Bishop's recipe ought to be useful, for a right-reverend Father-in-God should, by all the rules of logic, be on closer and more intimate speaking terms with "Omnipotence" than a mere rector, or vicar, to say nothing of the curates.

Hence it brings one up with a jolt to find that at the very outset his lordship says:—

"No rules can be given for the attainment of happiness. It is an elusive thing."

This is really distressing. The most elusive thing I have encountered has been a lodging-house flea intent on turning night into day. So elusiveness is a quality one could wish were absent in this association. And if there are no rules in the game the whole thing tends to become rather hazy.

Let us listen once more to the Bishop:—

"Our vile bodies exercise a large control over our bearing towards things in general. There are physiological as well as psychological factors in happiness. Good health takes a prominent place. It needs an exceptionally bright spirit for one who is constantly ailing not to be selfish and fretful. Indigestion, sleeplessness, rheumatism, weariness, can spoil happiness."

This may be from the *Well of English, undefiled*, but it sounds uncommonly like a patent-medicine advertisement. One almost expects a direct reference to Ally Sloper's Syrup, or Pink Pills for Green People. And perhaps the Bishop can explain why our bodies are referred to as "vile bodies." If a man's body is vile, surely there can be no real happiness. Indeed, the search for happiness appears to be too heavily handicapped. Consider the matter more closely.

The unfortunate Christian is, of necessity, a "miserable sinner." He possesses a "vile body." He is also liable to indigestion, sleeplessness, rheumatism, corns, and a disinclination to attend a place of worship. You see, he is damned in this life, and threatened with more damnation in a future existence. I fear that the seeker after happiness will have to get back to the starting place again.

If there are no rules in this game, there are suggestions galore. The Bishop says:—

"Two other things must be mentioned. One is work, the other money."

Admittedly, these two things loom largely in the search after happiness. Too much of the one, and too little of the other, and the addition of indigestion, rheumatism, piles, and so on, would be a waste of time in making the sinner miserable. Work and money! Such mundane things, too. Perhaps the real reason why the higher ecclesiastics work only one day weekly, and get as big salaries as possible, is that it conduces to their happiness. I believe the same idea animates the breasts of the stockbroker, and the horse-thief.

Further on, the Bishop assures the reader that "happiness cannot be built on a slippery foundation." His own search for happiness, although largely on Secularistic lines, is vitiated by preconceived theological opinions. For instance, he insists that the seeker after happiness "does not expect too much from people or things in this very imperfect world." Judging by his published utterances, the Bishop himself knows very little of the world; yet he is quite willing, even eager, to belittle it. His lordship reminds one of a female penitent at a Salvation Army meeting who shocked a pious gathering by declaring openly: "I was really wicked. I used to go to the pictures."

The world may be "imperfect" and men's bodies "vile," but the bishop acknowledges that there is beauty among the imperfections and vileness. He says that the Christian man "finds refreshment in beauty." So do the bald-headed men, with glossy shirt-fronts, who sit in the front row of the theatre-stalls. If the Bishop should insist that he means other kinds of beauty, I have never heard of thousands of Christians going to Southend to see the sun rise. More often than not they prefer to see the daughters bathing.

An old-world Greek philosopher is said to have gone out in broad daylight with a lamp in order to find an honest man. His task was easy in comparison with the Bishop's search for a "really happy" man. Considering how very imperfect his lordship thinks the world is, he expects the aspirant for happiness to be an admirable Crichton.

"He will not be pharisaical, his religion will make him attractive and not repellant. He dislikes shams and is sensitive to truth, but he will not wish everyone to toe the line of his own religious convictions."

"There's richness for you!" as Squeers the school-master puts it. After this, Freethinkers may hope, reasonably, that the Bishop will assist materially in the repeal of the ferocious Blasphemy Laws, which still disgrace the Statute Book of this alleged civilized country. For these laws were framed expressly

to make our forefathers "toe the line" in matters religious.

The Bishop's Secularism breaks down at the end of the column. He throws up the sponge, and finishes with reference to the "Author and Giver of all good things," and the "Divine Christ." So, like tramping the maze at Hampton Court, the unfortunate seeker after happiness finds himself where he started, profane and perspiring.

"It was not in this world that they expected to be happy or useful," writes Edward Gibbon of the early Christians. It was a telling sarcasm at the expense of some of the quaintest fanatics that the world has seen. The writings of the Early Fathers of the Christian Church prove it beyond all cavil or dispute. The trouble is that echoes of their neurotic and tommyrotic teaching may be found to-day in our cathedrals, churches, chapels, and even tin-tabernacles and evangelists' tents. Papists perpetuate the monstrous cruelties of monasteries and nunneries, and Protestants blaspheme humanity with their dogmas of original sin and damnation. Even their own followers sometimes rebel at such teaching. It was a colporteur, who, forgetting all his theology, broke out fervently:—

"Life is sweet, brother. There's night and day, brother, both sweet things; sun, moon, stars, brother, all sweet things; there's likewise the wind on the heath. Life is very sweet, brother, who would wish to die?"

So far as the Bishop keeps away from his theology he is readable and even reasonable. But the moment he tries to reconcile his Secularism with the patter of his profession, he becomes slightly ridiculous. Under the Christian Scheme the majority of the human race is doomed to what Mr. Mantalini calls "the demnition Bow-wows." Of necessity this should reduce the number of really happy persons to negligible proportions. As a plain fact there are lots of happy people. They may be found in excursion trains, char-a-bancs and at all the seaside and holiday resorts. Audiences at cinemas, circuses, theatres, music-halls, and football gatherings, are full of them. The vast majority of children simply radiate happiness. But, why state the obvious? The Bishop should look around him, and extend his travels beyond vestry-meetings and local tea-fights. If he does this, next time he tackles the subject of human happiness he may be bright and less inconsequential. He must not, however, lay the unction on with a trowel. People will not always take advice, as the following story shows. Old Mac had the flu. His doctor said, "Hot gruel and whisky every night, Mac." A week later the doctor came to ask how the treatment went. "Well, doctor!" said Mac. "I'm a wee bit behind with the gruel, but two months ahead with the whisky."

MIMNERMUS.

Angels and Sweetpeas.

After Heinrich Heine.

A FINE new song, a better song,
O friends will I compose you:
You need not wait, or weak or strong,
To have Heav'n's arms enclose you!
You could down here quite happy be,
Feeding both mind and body;
Nor moth, nor rust, nor mildew see,
Nor any sign of shoddy!
Sufficient bread is grown on earth
To nourish Bad and Holy:
Roses and Myrtle, Joy and Mirth,
And sweet-peas, fragrant, lowly!
Sweet-peas, sweet-peas for all to thieve,
When pods reveal their marrows;
So let us turn to Earth, and leave
The sky to Spooks and Sparrows!

J. M. STUART-YOUNG.

Mystery, Muddle and Morals.

ROMAN CATHOLIC SEXUAL ETHICS.

WE will get right down to brass tacks, those tacks that nail down the carpet whereupon we shall call our celebrated mental tumbler, Mr. Gilbert Keith Chesterton. Unwittingly and—may we whisper?—unwily he will do us a good turn.

Dr. Geikie-Cobb, one of the very few original and interesting ecclesiastics of our day, has been so sound and secular as to marry a divorced gentleman to a lady to whom he was engaged. The case has enjoyed some slight publicity, because the gentleman involved had played some slight part in public life, and has been an object of animosity to the domineering and interfering old dowagers of the Royal Borough of Kensington. And Catholic Mr. Chesterton, that stout fighter for freedom, agreeing for once with the meagre and Protestant Bishop of London, is annoyed that the marriage should have received ecclesiastical sanction. In half-a-page of historical half-truth, weary wit, and sixpenny satire, contained in *G.K.'s Weekly* for June 29, 1929, Mr. Chesterton puts his case; from a column's-worth of faded journalistic fun there is to be extracted the writer's aim and object, the core of his desires. This is it, in full:—

"The fancy that it would be well to have an independent spiritual institution in the world to judge all this wickedness of the world [including, of course, the re-marriage of divorced people], seems to come to him [Dr. Geikie-Cobb] with a shock of surprise." The additions in brackets are our own.

So we know exactly where we stand, and against what we have to fight. If there be any meaning in words, what Mr. Chesterton, whose sincerity is beyond question, really wants is the restoration of the Catholic Spiritual Power, that is, The Inquisition. To this we will return later.

For the present let us consider the case as it stands. Whether Mr. Chesterton wished the gentleman in question, who is in the prime of life, to become permanently celibate, or whether he would have preferred this human pair to "live in sin," as it used to be called, and so undergo the social boycotting that such unions enjoy in civilized Christian England, we do not know. Possibly our Catholic apologist does not know himself; what he does know is that Dr. Geikie-Cobb has given legal and ecclesiastical sanction to the union, and that he, Gilbert Keith Chesterton, the Holy Catholic Church, the Protestant Bishop of London, and a miscellaneous collection of "respectable" busybodies and holy cranks, including, no doubt, our ascetic friend Jesus Christ, and his pot-paunched sire, Jahveh, are annoyed about it. They all feel hurt and flouted. Here are two people who wish to marry, presumably because they are in love, their circumstances and state of being, physical, mental and moral, warranting the union; and Dr. Geikie-Cobb actually and nefariously consents to perform the ceremony.

To the merely lay mind there does not seem to be anything very remarkable or blameworthy or eccentric about the conduct of any of the actors in this social dramatic-comedy; there is nothing "to make a song about," to use the excellent phrase of the moment. But the possessor of the merely lay mind does not, like Mr. Chesterton, have to stand on his head for a living; he is not a professional tumbler or paradoxist; nor is he burdened with a spurious kind of myopic "mysticism," which is very like—not a whale, but—a mental eccentricity masquerading as a "religious" virtue. So the editor of *G.K.'s Weekly* and his theological friends of freedom come in "just here," all unexpected and uninvited as they are.

They have a long and syncopated—even if discordant—song to sing; a sweet old tale to tell; it is this, and we give it merely in epitome, thus summarizing in a few words the whole meat, matter and meaning of the theological objection. Behold!—

"God," whoever he may have been, being a legist (possibly a D.C.L. Why not?*), once and for all laid down deliberately certain rules, laws, regulations, and initiated certain rites, performances, ceremonies regarding his divine institution of marriage, and the damnable institution of divorce. Certainly this fellow "God" is the author and founder (according to their duly-accredited and paid representatives) of all religions, and each separate religion has a differing set of laws concerning human unions and disunions; but that, to a Catholic Mystic, is not significant; he knows, by divine intuition, that the only one of these sets of laws that is really genuine is his own. An odd coincidence; made odder by the fact that every rival religionist makes a precisely similar claim, and has precisely similar evidence to support it. It is therefore clear that Mr. Chesterton's mystic view of marriage must be correct. Yet, somehow or other, we remain sceptical. There seems to be something wrong somewhere.

By one of those queer chances that sometimes occur, in the very week in which Mr. Chesterton declaimed against the impious and sinful nuptials of this naughty gentleman, there appeared the following interesting fragment of history in our admirable contemporary, *Notes and Queries*. This paper every week gives an extract or two from a journal just two centuries old. Here is one of the extracts that was published in the issue for June 29, 1929:—

At an *auto-de-fe*, held at Coimbra in Portugal the 29th of May past, N.S., there came out in all sixty-seven persons, viz., twenty-nine men, and thirty-eight women. Two of the men had been guilty of apprehending persons pretending to be sent for that purpose from the Inquisition, of whom they got sums of money to let them go, when in reality they had no such power. A man and woman accused of dealing with the devil, and that to the woman the devil had appeared several times, and promised to enable her to perform cures. Three men for speaking heretical words. One man for marrying a second wife, knowing the first to be living. One man and woman for approving the sect of Molinos, three men and thirteen women of idolatry, in attributing the divinity to a certain person. Forty-one for Judaism, among them Father Manoel Nunes Ferreyra, Abbot of Atalaya, aged fifty, accused of joining with the Jews in the ceremonies of the Law of Moses: He was degraded of his priesthood, and banished for seven years to the Island of St. Thomas; and another person named Lewis de Faria, aged eighty years, who was in the Inquisition in 1671, and was taken up lately for saying he then saved his life by owning himself a Jew, though he was not one; sentenced to be whipt and sent to the galleys for three years. The rest of the persons were some sentenced into banishment, some to the galleys, some to be whipt and imprisoned, etc., but none were to be burnt. (From the *Weekly Journal*: or, the *British Gazetteer*. Saturday, June 28, 1729.)

An interesting extract, from whatever point it be viewed. To the eye of a philosopher the evolution of our sociology, of our psychology, of our race itself, may be reconstructed from these few words, less than three hundred in all. It is not difficult to picture the

* Mr. Chesterton will probably—nay, certainly—regard this suggestion as "blasphemy," or even "flat" (as distinguished from corrugated) blasphemy. If he denies that "God" can be a D.C.L., we must point out that a God who is capable of begetting a child, but incapable of getting an academic degree, strikes us as being rather an imperfect kind of deity.

state of society wherein such matters as those recorded in this weekly newspaper of two centuries ago were accepted by nearly everyone as commonplaces. By long and agonizing efforts, chiefly at the expense of the flower of our race, the "sports," the heretics, the infidels so-called, the Freethinkers, we have climbed out of the hell of suspicion, misery, torture and superstition that flourished, growing fat on human tears and blood, when we had what Mr. Chesterton calls "an independent spiritual institution in the world." It is into this ocean of blood and tears—the blood and tears of poor, crucified humanity—that the advocates of Roman Catholic domination would plunge mankind anew. Mr. Chesterton himself is no doubt personally incapable of cruelty. It is recorded that Torquemada was, in private life, a kindly and generous man. But gods in the skies have always been accustomed to batten on human blood and tears, and they always will. It is their natural food.

What are two centuries in the history of our race? A flash. There is always danger of a return to that "independent spiritual institution" beloved by the editor of *G.K.'s Weekly*; there will still be danger until supernatural religion is destroyed. That is the meaning of Voltaire's *écrasez l'infame*, crush the infamous thing, infamous in that it is treachery against humanity. Would anyone but a Catholic deny this?

We will consider the extract from *Notes and Queries* more closely. It is evidently a matter of surprise to the recorder that there are no sentences of burning alive. But we must excuse the Holy Catholic Church for this unfortunate omission. At this particular period there were not so many people as there had been who were willing to be burnt by "the independent spiritual power" of the Holy Inquisition. The work of the Reformers, the Humanists of the Rebirth, Erasmus, Montaigne, Rabelais, de Bergerac, Dolet, Vanini, Bruno, Margaret of Navarre, Boccaccio, Chaucer, and their circles, had begun to sink into the collective brain of European mankind. That sadistic old hag, the Holy Catholic Church, found her fangs beginning to decay. She could still snap and spit venom; she could rarely bite to slay. The "independent spiritual power in the world" had to content her bloated old body, her aching old bones, with comparatively mild cruelties, banishment, the galleys, whipping, imprisonment. She was just as spiteful as her failing omnipotence allowed her to be.

Roman Catholicism in this country in this year of Grace, 1929, is a mild and sentimental thing, with a simper of love on her silly saint-lips, and a tender regard for the morbid and miserable head of "the blessed Saviour," making her appeal to the ignorant and emotional throw-backs of all grades of society. She is comparatively harmless, for the coward's reason that there is a majority against her. But in her "good" time, when her power was real, she was as we have seen her reported to be. She still possessed, and still "enjoyed," the power of sending people to the whipping-post and to the galleys for "dealing with the Devil," for "speaking heretical words," for "practising Judaism," for "approving the sect of Molinos." She was indeed, in her day, a kind of medieval and wholly brutal Super-Dora, first inventing artificial and impossible crimes, and then punishing people for committing them. She was the spirit of Red Tape, the tape being the power of strangling independent thought, the red being the dye obtained from human blood.

It is this happily-moribund, superannuated, decaying monster, who is adored "even unto this day" by her devotees. Changelessness is her boast. Be it so; we know what enlightened Europe has

against her, what the awakening sense of humanity has to destroy ere it can enter into the heritage of brotherhood that will follow the destruction of sectarianism.

Meantime, it is good that Freethinkers should know that there is in England a crowd of witch-hunting, Jew-baiting, Jesus-worshipping reactionaries who have the will but—Man be praised!—not the power to reintroduce the medieval Papal tyranny, the "independent spiritual institution" for which Mr. Chesterton yearns.

These left-overs from the Ages of Faith are superficially smooth, cultured, literary Catholics, but beneath a thin crust of intellectual culture there lurks the old love of interference with human liberty; the old hatred of heresy; the old fear of witchcraft; the old anger against the impious Jews, who have always refused to accept the gods of the Catholic Church.

It is scarcely surprising that Mr. Chesterton should inveigh against an ecclesiastic who acts with secular common-sense; for he is a member of an organization to which common-sense is fatal. Catholics have "mystic" reasons for their faith, and "mysticism" has been made the excuse for most of the evil wrought by man upon man, for nearly all the persecution, the brutality, the intolerance wherewith the history of man is stained. And now, in 1929, here in England, the Catholics exclaim against divorce and other secular benefits, for no better or worse reason than that "God," who is merely one of millions of gods—all man-made, and therefore fictitious—is against them. "God," who is a compound of tradition and reaction, is naturally always against human freedom and human happiness; equally naturally, all advance into happier, nobler, wider conditions for humans is made in the teeth of Authority; and the chief Authority of the reactionaries is the Roman Catholic Church, run in heaven and hell and purgatory by its divine family of evil ghosts; and on earth by the Holy Father, who wields a waning "independent spiritual authority" over his obedient and slave-souled spiritual dupes.

Our essential quarrel with this execrable religion is that it interposes itself between man and truth, between man and woman, between man and freedom, between man and happiness, for no better reason than that one of its gods, a semi-mythical Jewish peasant, exalted celibacy above marriage. This nay-saying to life is treachery to humanity; one can do no better service to man than by aiding in the destruction of "God," the root of all our social and moral, and of most of our mental and physical, evils.

VICTOR B. NEUBURG.

Ariadne; or a Noble Effort.

COUNT HERMANN KEYSERLING, a few years ago, wrote a book, *The World in the Making*, it was eminently sane, good sense marked every line, but very little notice was taken of it. The writer's point of view was universal, and he showed the master spirit at work by being able to handle easily big ideas. This author has now written another book, *Creative Understanding*, published by Jonathan Cape, 30 Bedford Square, price 25s.

It is a bigger book than *The World in the Making*, and not so direct; in a few places there is obscurity, but that may be the fault of the present reviewer. To compress the whole of the book into a few words, it may be said that the author has attempted to indicate how man may take a new step in the world of Becoming. If the next step to be made by man is in the domain of consciousness, Keyserling will have had the privilege to indicate how it may be done. He has drawn on many philosophies, chiefly Chinese and Indian, and he shows where East and West may meet in his Philosophy of

Significance. In his many footnote references to his own works he reminds the reader of Schopenhauer's habit.

Professor Gilbert Murray stated sometime ago that most people understand only a tenth part of what they read or hear; Keyserling, in his thesis of significance gives a good example, in a positive manner of the truth of it, as follows: "The words in a sentence mean, in the first instance, exactly what they are worth as small coins, that is to say, what can be objectively ascertained by means of the dictionary. In the second place, they mean what a certain person says when making use of them. But what he says need not render his exact meaning, for very few are masters of expression; by this we have reached a third story of possible meaning. Only the fourth would be that of true understanding, where the meaning intended by the speaker coincides with the essential significance of the connexion in question." A real appreciation of this statement will help one considerably when dealing with the thick fogs of theology.

It is rather ironical that, at a time of the disturbances in Jerusalem, Keyserling writes of war: "Nowadays we have come to look upon the idea of a religious war as grotesque; it is to be hoped that soon it will be the same, where the fights of nationalities are in question." He is rightly optimistic however, and is in the good company of Wilde, who wished war to be regarded as vulgar. Keyserling is, at this point, in the world of consciousness, asking for the lever of Archimedes. And all grown-up men should give it to him, and wish M. Briand and other statesmen, every success in their efforts to bring about a United States of Europe.

Keyserling has a very thoughtful study in one of the chapters, "The Culture of Making all Things Easy." He is not rigid in his arguments, for, after he has shown the defects of facility, he also demonstrates the compensation which will mature at a later time. To paraphrase him, he seems to say, to the human race, glut yourselves with things until you find out that there is something more valuable than possession. He records also, how his father did not make it easy for him as a boy. His father would not tell him anything twice, and it was made difficult for the inquirer in order that what was learned or required was not easily forgotten. This is a familiar method in rural England—or was, to the present writer; Schopenhauer recorded the thought in a few words that everybody wants to know but few want to learn. More people put their thinking out than is imagined; our daily newspapers, with few exceptions, are incapable of creative thought. They are doing the easiest thing by dealing with effects; they announce, for instance, that every day in Great Britain seventeen people left their homes to meet death in the streets. They had forgotten, or never knew that our old-fashioned forefathers had a good reason for enclosing railways, and at the outset of more vehicular traffic they were incapable of logically following the inception, and as far as wise guidance of the human race is concerned, nearly the whole of newspapers can be ruled out, for as Keyserling states, "One can very well have the gift of language without having anything to say."

Creative Understanding is a book to be read carefully; in the present writer's opinion it is a synthesis of all cultures, religions, and histories. It will not appeal to a vast public in upper or lower circles, but it will find a welcome response from those who desire to get a better cognition of phenomena. Keyserling is frigidly austere about mysticism, and he can see that most religions have run their course. What has been emphasized continually in this paper "intellectual honesty" finds an admirable expression by the author. "Metaphysical untruthfulness—which certainly does not exclude personal untruthfulness—is the empire premise of the Jesuit. To a less degree this is true of every type of believer." He continues, and dismisses theocracy as a ruling caste.

In the new avenue of thinking, Keyserling expounds his ideas of significance, and describes his considered conclusion as "the final wording of the necessary relation between meaning and expression." And this to the volubility of battalions of exponents of primitive superstition is as deadly as anything written by Spinoza. It would be good to know that a copy of this book was in every library in the United Kingdom—and read.

Creative Understanding should receive a good welcome from Freethinkers; it is parallel with all the fundamental ideas of Freethought, and it is an interrogation—"What do you mean?"—or conversely. "Define your terms!" When this is done, speech, conversation, and argument, receive a value, and the old adage of speech being silver will be altered to read gold.

C-DE-B.

Acid Drops.

The *Schoolmaster* sympathizes with the fear expressed by Canon Brown as to the effects of "a wholly secular system of education." We quite understand Canon Brown's fears of a wholly secular system of education. It touches his vested interests. And we should be more impressed with the *Schoolmaster's* fears if we did not feel that its own attitude was inspired by the same trades union kind of feeling. For it is in favour of religious teaching, but not denominational. How can one distinguish? A religious teaching must be either Christian or non-Christian. It cannot be Jewish, and Christian, and Buddhist, and Mohammedan at the same time. It can only mean by undenominational something on which the Christian denominations agree, and damn the outsiders! It agrees with this because Christians have it in their power to make promotion difficult. If the *Schoolmaster* openly proclaimed itself against any plan that tended in any way to make the teacher's job less comfortable it would be better.

What else can it mean by expressing fears of a secular system of education. It knows quite well that a school receiving a grant is expected to pursue a wholly secular system for the whole of the school time, save for a brief period at the opening of the day. We must really decline to believe that the *Schoolmaster* can be so sunk in mumbo-jumboism as to believe that the formulas gone through at the opening of school have the magical influence of permeating the rest of the day. It does not want the parson in the school in person, because it knows he is a confounded nuisance to everyone on the staff. It lacks the courage to say that it will not have the parson in school by proxy, because that would injure the chance of promotion. People who talk so loudly of educational ideals ought to be ready to sacrifice just a little for them. It is easy to work for ideals when they are easy and advancement lie along the same road.

The talk about the evil of secular education is sheer pulpit jargon—at second-hand. What cannot be taught on a secular basis? It is quite plain that science, literature, geography, arithmetic, reading, writing, etc., do not need religion. Eventually we come down to morals, citizenship, character. Will the *Schoolmaster* say outright that these things cannot be taught without religion? If it does we should know just where we are. And if it does say so it will get the lie from the best type of teacher in the profession. It is useless shielding oneself behind vague phrases. Let us know just what subjects cannot be efficiently taught without religion, and precisely in what directions harm would be caused by a wholly secular system of education. We venture to say beforehand that the *Schoolmaster* will not have the courage to reply to this plain question. But we suggest that teachers who have self-respect should write the editor informing him that all teachers are not quite so silly or so mean as that comment would make them appear. Sensible teachers know that the only way to really keep the parson out of the school is to keep religion out. The parson does not want to come personally to the schools. That would mean more work for him. He only wants the teacher to act as his substitute; and the *Schoolmaster* is helping to see that he gets what he wants.

Mr. Cyril Ball, of Banhura College, North India, says there is among Indian students an intense hunger for

education. Let's hope they are intelligent enough not to be spoofed by the kind of education missionary schools and colleges dish out.

A religious weekly thinks that a most amazing and disconcerting fact is that, in this age of science and, above all, in this age when psychology is the special science, evangelism is still fashioned by rule-of-thumb. Our friend adds: "We need to know not only how not to save the people, but how to save them." We humbly suggest that knowing "how" or "not how" is of very little use when the large majority of citizens simply don't care a damn whether they are "saved" or not.

A woman was recently prevented from entering a Brighton church because she was hatless. This ban on uncovered womanly heads is all to the good, if it sets women pondering on the fact that the taboos and restrictions they have shaken free of in recent years originated mostly with the Christian religion, and under its influence.

At a Beckenham chapel recently, a service was interrupted by a plague of flies. The flies were so great a nuisance that the congregation bolted into an adjoining schoolroom, where the service was continued. Maybe God sent the flies to test these godly persons' Christian resignation. If that was the case, there is a black mark scored in heaven against the congregation.

Gipsy Smith evidently realizes the truth of what has been said here recently—that the Churches will soon have to turn their attention to evangelizing their own members. Says he: "Preachers know that if they have a headache it is not caused by the man outside whom they haven't got, but by the people in the Church." And he adds that modern evangelizing missions have not reached the outsider, because the insider is not what he ought to be. If this is true, we respectfully suggest that howling evangelizing troupes—including the Salvationists—should go through their antics inside their tabernacles in future. This would help to solve the "noise problem" about which the newspapers have been talking recently. And it would certainly be conducive to Sabbath-day peace.

Sir W. Arbuthnot Lane is doing his best to encourage in this country, for the benefit of the nation's health, "Sun-bathing without false modesty." We gather from an article in a daily paper, that Sir Arbuthnot quite realizes that opposition to his suggestion is mainly pious. The controlling bodies of sea-side resorts should be stimulated, he urges, to provide every possible means for people to obtain access to the sun's rays. This is easier said than done. There are too many puritans on the governing bodies of seaside resorts. Seeming to realize this, Sir Arbuthnot says: "Perhaps a holiday spent in the South of Europe would do much to educate many of those narrow-minded, bigoted people, who are, unfortunately, in a position to control the lives and happiness of their fellow-creatures." The eminent doctor adds:—

What could possibly be more idiotic and fanatical than the objections to mixed bathing; and how characteristic is that attitude of a degraded and prurient mentality!

For our part, we are not so sanguine as to think that a holiday trip to Southern Europe would improve puritans' narrow minds. Pious mis-education is not so easily dislodged as that. Christian idiocy and fanaticism are difficult diseases to cure.

The Government is sending out some qualified women doctors to fight the witch-doctors on the Gold Coast. They will each receive a starting salary of £600 rising to £2,000. But what is the matter with the witch-doctors at home? It is so like our usual methods. We pay salaries to medical men and women to fight the witch-

doctors in Africa, and meanwhile pay witch-doctors at home to go on with their job. The Government even pays one of them to perform daily incantations in the House of Commons. More, we send out agents to fight the witch-doctors and supply the natives with Bibles which teach them to depend upon witch-doctors when they are ill. Will some one be good enough to tell us the difference between the witch-doctors of Africa and the cures laid down in the Bible, or the pilgrimages to Lourdes and similar places? We don't suppose that any one worth listening to will, but we ask the question all the same.

You can find everything necessary to man in the New Testament—so long as you cultivate the Christian virtue of "lying for the greater glory of God." Thus, the Rev. Dillworth-Harrison, Vicar of St. Bartholomew's Brighton, says in a sermon in the *Church Times*, "There is no joy in the world like the joys of a united family life, and this too draws its divine sanction from Nazareth." Mr. Dillworth-Harrison must have a special edition of the New Testament, for there are no pictures of united family in our copy. As for the family of Jesus they are reported wandering about looking for him, who probably should have been at home, helping Dad, and then saucing his mother when she found him. You can find anything in the New Testament, provided—see above-mentioned condition.

According to a religious journal, there is a notable number of churches and monasteries still existing in Soviet Russia. During a session of the Commissariat of Education, a speaker stated that, according to statistics, there are about 50,000 churches still existing in Soviet Russia, where regular worship is conducted, 500 monasteries, 25,000 different free church communities, thousands of prayer-houses, mosques, and synagogues. The total number of clergymen as preachers amounts to 350,000. Membership of various religious sects amounts to 6,000,000.

A Methodist writer, the Rev. Ernest Braham, says: "the crinoline theology of the Victorian era has gone, and we must let in more air and light into our minds as well as the sun-glow upon our bodies." Evidently the work of Freethinkers has been pretty efficacious. But it was hardly wise of the rev. gent to hint that Methodists would benefit still more by taking the *Freethinker*.

Canon Peter Green says so many people are holding back from the religious life altogether. And in so far as this is due to their having no desire for God, nothing can be done to help them until such desire is awakened. We gather from this that the many preachers who assert that "man is incurably religious" and "man is insatiably thirsty for God," are not so observant as Canon Peter Green. There are evidently many exceptions among "man."

Canon Green also explains why there is so much difference of opinion—often manifested in bitterness and strife—among Christians. The reason is, we are told, that "truth is so large, and we are so small, that no one man can grasp the whole of it." We have an explanation more feasible than that. Christian truth was so stupidly set out, and so abominably explained, by God in his Holy Book, that Christians just couldn't help squabbling over it. Still, no doubt God had a motive for presenting Christian truth to the world in the form of a jig-saw puzzle. Perhaps he thought that Christians would be more easy to manage in heaven, if they arrived there with their wits nicely addled! If this suggestion won't do, maybe the theologians can provide a better.

The Rev. A. W. Harrison, who is supposed to be a cultured scholar of the Methodist Church, has been writing about "Heredity." The quality of his culture can be judged by the following piece of First Century thinking:—

The doctrine of original sin takes us back to our

original ancestor, and informs us that he gave way to temptation, and that the consequences of his fall remain in the very life blood of the race. We know that some poison seems to have entered into our blood, and that it is perpetually passed onward to those who come after.

Any writer on biology who talked in this vein would be the laughing stock of the scientific world. Still, it is sensible enough for cultured theologians.

The same Mr. Harrison reminds his readers that the manual of Methodist law still asserts:—

No person shall, on any account, be permitted to retain any official situation in our Societies who holds opinions contrary to the total depravity of human nature.

A very godly law, too. We hope it is still enforced. The Methodist Church can, by strict enforcement, soon discover which of its members are real Christians.

Mr. E. J. Chamberlain, Secretary of the Y.M.C.A., has been telling a story about the Association's work with the troops in the Rhineland. The central Y.M.C.A. in Cologne was a large ex-music hall capable of holding 2,000 persons. Here originated the Rhineland Army Service—an effort of the chaplains. Sunday after Sunday, says Mr. Chamberlain, a packed hall of soldiers and their families assembled to hear an address by some well-known preacher, and "to sing the hymns they loved." At the time the German mark was falling in value, a collection was taken and eleven bags of notes were handed in. When the money was banked next day, the amount credited to the Y.M.C.A. was exactly 9d! Mr. Chamberlain adds that the Association's workers had "to exercise every kind of ingenuity not to make heavy losses." The soldiers, it appears, pretty shrewdly estimated the value of the entertainment provided!

Over eleven million copies of the Bible or parts of the Bible were sold last year. Wonderful! So the *Daily Express* prints one of its nice little office-boy leaderettes, which says that when people talk about the decline of literary taste, there is the answer. Eleven million copies of the Bible—or parts of the Bible, in 130 languages were sold last year. And the King, says the *Daily Express* office, it is well known reads a chapter of the Bible each day. Far be it from us to question that statement, or to discount its effect on the average man or woman who may be pictured now rushing off to get a copy of the Bible and diligently reading a chapter on the way to station to catch an early train. Kings of England always read a chapter of the Bible in the morning, until a long time after they are dead, when it leaks out that they read something entirely different. And our Kings for the past two or three centuries, as we all know have been widely recognized as supreme arbiters in things literary.

Considering, however, the number of people who are engaged in selling these parts of the Bible at one penny each, who hawk them round schools, etc.; considering also that as a fetish book it ought to be as popular as mascots—we invite the *Express* to find out how many of these are sold; and that there are some eighty thousand professional preachers who are engaged in telling the whole population that each house ought to have a copy of the Bible, and that it is transported abroad by the hundreds of thousand to convert the Chinese and others, eleven million does not seem such a very large number after all. Meanwhile the clergy, who ought to know, lament that people no longer read the Bible. Even the office, having forgotten what he had just written, remarks that "multitudes (presumably in this country) hardly ever open the Bible." Luckily for the *Daily Express*, the majority for whom it writes is hardly likely to remember in paragraph number two what it read in paragraph number one. May we remind the writer that Charlie Peace also read his Bible very regularly, and that it was read to him shortly before his spiritual guide bade him god-speed—on the scaffold.

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TO CORRESPONDENTS.

M. STEINBERGER.—Of all the impudent begging associations in this country the Salvation Army takes an easy first place. You should inquire how this emigration scheme is worked. How much of the money is actually given? The public would be surprised if the facts were more generally known.

E. A. KEMP.—Thanks for cutting. We do not think the Church has ever ceased to advertise. What is meant is, we take it, that the advertising should be done better than the clergy seem able to do it.

F. GATTSBILL.—Yours is not an unusual experience, but the only way to get what one is morally entitled to get is to keep on pegging away. Often much more good is done than one can see, or even trace.

V. CLARK.—We note that your recollection of the matter of the G. B. Shaw canard confirms our statement, and that of Mr. A. B. Moss, that the whole affair is purely imaginary.

D.P.S.—We think the question had better be left in the hands of the present disputants.

M.—Mr. Cohen would not be able to come this side of Christmas. The gentleman mentioned is no relative of ours. We did not hear of the suicide of the other party. Was it so, or merely a "fake?" We fancy he was given to playing jokes on credulous folk.

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

The National Secular Society's office is at 62 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

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

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

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

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

Sugar Plums.

The arrangements for the debate between Mr. Cohen and Mr. Shaw Desmond on Friday, October 25 are now complete. Details will be found on another page. We hear that Mr. Desmond is both a good speaker and a good debater, which is all to the good. We advise those who wish to make sure of good seats to secure their tickets as early as possible.

A discussion between Mr. J. Clayton and the Rev. W. Priestly on the subject "Religion and Science, Are they in Harmony?" has been arranged to take place in the King's Hall, Accrington, Sunday, September 29. The discussion will commence at 8 o'clock.

Mr. Clayton continues to hold good meetings in the district he is working, and much notice is being taken in the local press of his lectures. We hear from independent sources quite good accounts of his lectures, and his firmness and courtesy seems to gain him a hearing with those to whom he speaks. This is as it should be. Tact and good humour go a long way towards securing at least attention, ultimately conviction.

A Bradlaugh Demonstration will be held to-day (September 29.)

We have received an article from Mr. V. Neuburg' replying to Mr. Dodds, and dealing with Charles Southwell, which we regret we are compelled to hold over till our next issue.

Letters from Messrs. C. W. J. Tennant, Andrew Clarke and Hewson Cowen are held over till next week owing to want of space. The same apology holds good of the continuation of Dolet.

The formal opening of the South Place Ethical Society's new home, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, took place on Monday evening last. Mr. Delisle Burns took the chair and there were a number of speakers. We wish the Society every success in its new home.

A Bradlaugh Demonstration will be held to-day (September 29), on Clapham Common, at 3.15. There will be a number of speakers. South London Freethinkers will please note.

A correspondent sends us the following from Zane Grey's "Tales of Lonely Trails," published by Hodder & Stoughton:—

A celebrated bear-hunter and guide of the north-west told me that for twenty years he had been taking eastern ministers—preachers of the gospel—on hunting trips into the wild. He assured me that of all the bloody murderers—waders in gore, as he expressed it—these teachers of the gospel were the worst. The moment they got out into the wild they wanted to kill, kill, kill. He averred their natures seemed utterly to change.

Perhaps the nature of these preachers was not changed quite so much as appeared on the surface. The essentially brutal and sadistic nature of large numbers of the ministers of the gospel is fairly apparent to a psychologist. A holiday in the wilds only gave it room for another and more open expression.

What is lost upon the many, may gain a hearing with the few; what is lost to-day, may be recalled tomorrow; what is lost in fulness, may be regained in portions; what fails to convince, may excite misgivings; what fails with the heart, may create the wish.—J. H. Newman.

The Kreutzer Sonata.

(Continued from page 598.)

WHEN Pozdnishéf reveals that he was the man who murdered his wife, out of jealousy (for which he was tried and acquitted) silence fell upon the passengers. At the next station all left the carriage except Pozdnishéf and the teller of the story. Then Pozdnishéf tells how it happened.

He was the son of a wealthy landed proprietor and received a University education. After that, he says, "I led the ordinary life of the well-bred, that is, of a vicious man, yet was convinced, like the majority, that I was blameless in the matter of morality. I had always dreamed of a lofty and poetical ideal of married life." At the same time he was in no hurry to get married, and to the loose women with whom he consorted, he was generous, and considered himself a perfectly honourable man. For years, he says, he lived the most disgraceful life while dreaming of the most exalted love.

At length, at the age of thirty, he "sought for a virgin whose purity might be worthy of me. I rejected many of them whom I thought weren't sufficiently pure." At last he found one whom he thought came up to his standard. After he became engaged, he showed the young lady his Diary, so that she could learn something of his past life. When she read and understood, he says: "so great was her terror, her despair and consternation, that she was on the point of breaking our engagement. How much better for both had she done so!"

It will be noticed that, so far, the story follows closely the details of Tolstoy's own private life up to the time of his marriage, at the age of thirty-four, to a girl of nineteen. Even to the detail of making her read his Diary. For Tolstoy seems to have made a practice of entering up his debaucheries from day to day. The Countess never forgot this brutality, and it rankled in her mind to her dying day. She refers to it bitterly, several times in her Diary. In 1879, she writes: "These diaries, which he made me read, before our wedding, out of an excessive sense of duty, upset me very much. He shouldn't have done it; it made me cry as I looked into his past."

Again, in 1890, she records: "... I don't think I have ever got over the horror I experienced when I read Lyova's [Tolstoy's] diaries before our marriage, and I doubt that the sharp sting of jealousy and my bewilderment at the thought of so much filth and debauchery, has ever quite disappeared. May God preserve all young souls from such wounds—for they will never heal."³

There was a dark stain of cruelty in the character of Tolstoy. We have seen how he delighted in tormenting the inoffensive Tourgenef. In sport he was the same. "He took a savage delight in the terrors of the quarry," says Zweig. "'The pangs of the dying beast give me exquisite pleasure,' he avows, when he has brained a wolf with the butt end of his gun."⁴ His wife, writing in her diary (October 8, 1862) records: "He likes to torture me and to see me weep because he has no faith in me. He would like me to have gone through as much evil as himself, so that I might more fully appreciate the good..."⁵ The Countess was mistaken here, for by this time, as we shall see, Tolstoy would have liked to make all women weep. He hated them individually and in the mass. But to return to our story.

After his marriage, Pozdnishéf says, "I was cap-

tured, and it was very easy to capture me." in spite of what he has just said, about how many years he had put off marriage, and how particular he had been in his choice. He then begins a long diatribe against women, and the terrible power she has obtained over men. "But where is her power"? Asks his travelling companion. "Where is her power! Everywhere, and in everything! Go past the shops in any large town... see whether in nine-tenths of those shops there is anything for men's use?... Millions of people, generations of toilers, perish, working like galley-slaves in the factories, only to satisfy her caprice." He proceeds, with increasing excitement:—

Woman has so acquired the art of evoking sensuality, that a man cannot address her quietly. As soon as a man has approached a woman, he has already fallen under her spell and become dazed. Even in former days, I always felt uncomfortable and frightened when I saw a woman arrayed in a ball-dress, but now it simply terrifies me, and I see something plainly dangerous and wrong, and want to call a policeman and demand protection against the danger, and have it removed! "Yes, you laugh!" shouted he at me; "but it is not at all a joke... It is like setting all sorts of traps in the roads and public paths: it is even worse! Why are games of chance forbidden, while women in attire evoking sensuality are not forbidden? They are a thousand times more dangerous."

Here we have the authentic voice of Tolstoy himself, shouting out the private opinions, through a character in fiction, which he dare not avow as his own. Maxim Gorky says of him: "Woman, in my opinion he regards with implacable hostility and loves to punish her."⁶ At times, says Gorky, he "roused in me a feeling very like hatred... Yes, he is great. I am deeply convinced that, beyond all that he speaks of, there is much which he is silent about, even in his diary—he is silent, and probably, will never tell it to anyone." Certainly he did not say all he had in his mind about women; for, upon one occasion, after listening silently to a conversation, on the subject of women, by Suler, Tchekhov, and some others: he suddenly said: "And I will tell the truth about women, when I have one foot in the grave—I shall tell it, jump into my coffin, pull the lid over me, and say, 'Do what you like now.' The look he gave me was so wild, so terrifying that we all fell silent for a while."⁷

Gorky was no prude, as his books bear witness, and they have been toned down in our translations. He had spent a good part of his life as a common tramp, and as a dockside labourer; and might well be reckoned to be case-hardened as regards "language," but he confesses that Tolstoy disgusted him. He tells us: "I always disliked what he said about women—it was unspeakably 'vulgar,'... It seemed as if he had once been hurt, and could neither forget nor forgive... I was overwhelmed by his tone and lost my head, he spoke so plainly and brutally... using a stream of indecent words with a simplicity which seemed to me cynical and even offended me. Later I came to see that he used unmentionable words only because he found them more precise and pointed, but at the time it was unpleasant to listen to him."⁸ Tolstoy was always ready to question every one, male or female, as to their sexual experiences and habits. One day he asked Anton Tchekhov, the dramatist: "You whored a great deal when you were young?" Tchekhov, with a confused smile, pulling at his little beard, muttered something inaudible; and Tolstoy, looking

³ *The Diary of Tolstoy's Wife 1860-1891*: pp. 42-229.

⁴ Stefan Zweig: *Adepts in Self-Portraiture*. p. 229.

⁵ *The Diary of Tolstoy's Wife 1860-1891*.

⁶ Gorky: *Reminiscences of Leo Tolstoy*. 6. 24.

⁷ *Ibid.* p. 60.

⁸ *Ibid.* pp. 63-64.

at the sea, confessed, that he himself had been "indefatigable."⁹

Gorky says that Tolstoy talked readily and much about women, like a French novelist, and always "with the coarseness of a Russian peasant." His old friend, Raévsky, returning home one day from a visit to Tolstoy, said: "What questions that scoundrel puts! He asks about one's relations with one's own wife."¹⁰

We should not dwell upon this side of Tolstoy's character, but for the fact that he assumed the role of prophet, and preacher, to the world at large. We ourselves can remember how Tolstoy was held up to us as a pattern and exemplar. A holy man, an ideal follower of Christ. I wonder what my maiden aunts would have thought of the real Tolstoy! I can remember one of them especially—sitting on a sofa, upright as a bottle, thin, prim, angular, with drooping eyelids and long corkscrew curls. Silent, only speaking when spoken to. A survival from early Victorian, to late Victorian times. Unloved, unwanted, a subject for heartless derision and mockery. All the happiness and joy of life crushed out of her, under the Victorian steam-roller of Christian morality. Probably only prevented from escape from this hell, into the peace of a suicide grave, by the fear of punishment, for that sin, by a redder hell after death. I could not see the tragedy of it then, only its comic aspects. When people are singing the praises of the Victorian age they might give a thought to some of its victims. Christian apologists wax eloquent about the horrors of human sacrifices to heathen gods. For our part we should prefer the quick stroke of the sacrificial knife, to the long-drawn-out agonies often inflicted by Christian morality.

W. MANN.

(To be concluded.)

Materialism Re-Stated.

A CRITICISM.

Some little time ago Mr. Chapman Cohen expressed a wish that was almost a challenge, of some one to review *Materialism Re-stated*. At the time I had the desire to tackle the job but pressure of work, and the fact that I also had written a book (*Towards the Answer*) on a similar subject, prevented me. The latter reason, however, was both an incentive and a deterrent.

Mr. Cohen begins his introduction by saying that his "book would have been shorter if he had had the capacity to make it so." At a guess I think that what meat is in the book could have been easily put into half the pages with great advantage to the book's effect. A fairly adequate summary of the work can be put into less lines than the book has pages; as thus:—

Early man "explained" things in general by supernatural agencies.

All increase of knowledge has tended towards doing away with supernatural explanations.

In fact, all the universe is within the sphere of "natural" phenomena, and the territory of the-supernatural is nil. Materialism is the name given to this view of things.

Materialism, as a word, has connotations with matter which have enabled its opponents to give it

ethically as a philosophy a bad name and, as a further consequence to fasten on it a false conception of matter as its base.

"Materialism is not dependent on a particular conception of matter." (p. 47) "is not dependent on matter at all."

Because false conceptions of matter have been foisted on Materialism by opponents, and unfortunately accepted by many Materialists is why a re-statement is necessary.

The essence of Materialism is contained in the statement that "all phenomena, no matter to what order they belong, are due to the compositions of natural forces." (p. 80.)

The shifting of base from matter to force is the restatement. The universe is not wound up like a clock (by somebody). It is just there (or here). Talk of cause and effect, with an agent or a causal nexus, is gratuitous mystery. (p. 93.) "A 'first cause' is downright nonsense. (p. 100.) Life arose in substantially the same way that chemical and other phenomena have made their appearance. (p. 106.) Like everything else it is a composition of forces." . . . That's all . . . Doesn't seem a great deal does it?

I am not going to say that Mr. Cohen's conclusions are all wrong. I disagree with much that he says, but it is the unimpressive way in which he puts his case that strikes me most. I am indeed quite sure that his case could be put so as to make it very formidable against attack and very effective in attack. *Materialism Re-stated* does not succeed in either way.

In the introduction, page viii, we get the statement that "the essence of Materialism lies in the simple statement that every phenomenon in the universe is the consequent of a composition of natural forces."

Much depends on the definition of the word "natural." If Mr. Cohen had gone into this point more carefully he would have found that his arguments would require modification. I will revert to it later when his omission becomes serious.

Chapter I. "A Question of Prejudice."

Page 12. "Naturalism"—used, I take it, as a synonym for Materialism—and Supernaturalism stand as opposed form of thought—no accommodation is possible . . . there is no border land—a discredited Supernaturalism would gladly share the disputed territory" (—how can there be any disputed territory if there is no border land?) [and] "would freely hand over the whole region of the inorganic world to Naturalism if it may only retain command of the world of life and thought." This sounds well, but doesn't happen to be correct. If one counts heads, Supernaturalism is *not* discredited. It is what the vast majority of people believe (unfortunately). And what spokesmen of Supernaturalism have "gladly offered to share," and "freely hand over."

One way in which *Materialism Re-stated* must be considered is as to how it equips young Freethinkers to hold their end up in debate with "Supernaturalists." I feel sure that the reading of the book will leave them with a very hazy idea of Materialism itself, and will give them very little help in answering the arguments which the other side can and will put forward.

Page 15. When somebody says that "we are bound as Materialists to explain mental phenomena in terms of matter and motion," and "we at once find Materialists who accept the statements and set about defending them," then it is a case "that the Materialist has been found defending positions he need not defend." Ninety pages further on Mr. Cohen says that "we are certainly warranted in assuming

⁹ Maxim Gorky: *Reminiscences of Tolstoy*. p. 21.

¹⁰ Aylmer Maude. *Life of Tolstoy. Later Years*. p. 403.

that "life" arose in substantially the same way that chemical and other phenomena have made their appearance." Also, according to him, all phenomena are "compositions of forces." It is therefore a perfectly legitimate thing to say that the Materialist must explain mental phenomena in terms of matter and motion. Between matter and motion, and "chemical and other phenomena," and "composition of forces," the difference is as between tweedle dum and tweedledee. To get out of his difficulty he spends a lot of time trying to prove that Materialism has no connexion with matter, by the hopeless method of making out matter to be something else of the same name—though on page 54 his mental exhaustion leads to a generous offer to call "matter" simply X. Which gives the show away. X is the sign of the unknown.

Implicitly, of course, his X is force—for the furthest point he reaches is to reduce everything to "a composition of forces." His desperate eagerness to retain the term Materialism is not understandable. On his own showing, the word misleads both friends and foes. The title of his book should have been Materialism Re-stated as Forceism or "Materialism now Forceism" or some such phrase.

Chapter II—"Some Critics of Materialism."

Mr. Cohen can be very entertaining when being sarcastic. His best effort, perhaps, is in the Introduction ("journalists who are, as competent to talk about Materialism as a cow, etc.) But the thing can be overdone. A page or two of *Materialism Re-stated* could have been saved by a restraint in this direction. Alternatively the space could have been utilized for a little more reasoning. Chapter II is the most notable instance. The critics and most other people (and the dictionary) have a similar idea of what Materialism is; and Mr. Cohen is very severe on them because they do not know the real genuine article (*i.e.*, Mr. Cohen's brand). Actually the difference in the two brands is negligible and several times we get the curious spectacle of Mr. Cohen being sarcastic—at second hand—*on himself*.

Mr. Cohen puts a heavy foot on Lord Balfour "who has somehow or other managed to gain the reputation of being an able philosophic thinker. After quoting Lord Balfour, Mr. Cohen says "one is not quite certain what it means, and one may be forgiven the suspicion that this uncertainty extends to Lord Balfour. If Lord Balfour means that a Materialist holds that the story of human nature may be expressed in terms of physics, the statement is too scientifically absurd to require confutation." I guess Lord Balfour does mean something of the kind—and he is right. Why should Mr. Cohen object? He says life arose in substantially the same way as chemical phenomena and, that all phenomena are compositions of forces, and that "most of the criticisms of Materialism ignore the physical substratum which unquestionably underlies all mental phenomena" (p. 115.) Why doesn't he stick to his guns? Lord Balfour's own position is quite open to criticism, but not his idea of Materialism. Mr. Cohen has in fact hoisted himself with his own petard.

Mr. Cohen is very unfortunate in his criticisms of the critics. He charges them with fallacies, and answers them with quibbles. For example, Prof. Needham's "fallacy" is that "Mind and all mental processes cannot receive explanation or description in physico-chemical terms." When Lord Balfour in effect charged Materialism with saying that mental processes could receive explanation, etc. Mr. Cohen said the statement was too absurd for scientific refutation. When Prof. Needham says mental processes cannot receive explanation—it is a fallacy. Really Mr. Cohen you must not play fast and loose

this way. I do not say you do it deliberately. You do it (in my opinion) because you really have not the scientific mind—much as you affect to have. You are too exact and slap dash. Your reduction of all phenomena to composition of forces, and your adherence to the mechanistic theory of biology—and everything else—presupposes an essential identity of the forces underlying everything—chemistry, physics, biology—everything. You say in your quibbling "exposure" of Prof. Needham's "fallacy," "It should be enough to ask him: If it were possible to explain mental processes in physico-chemical terms where would be the need for "laws" of biology or of psychology? The very existence of such laws is enough to prove that his criticism harbours a gross fallacy."

Here again you do not recognize your own Materialism. Nor do you seem to have a clear idea of what "laws" of science are. For instance: Have physics or chemistry anything to do with breathing? No, "Breathing" is an item of biology. It is a "law" of biology that an animal must continue to breathe if it continues to live—but to explain breathing you would have to bring in laws of physics and chemistry. Going further you would explain physics and chemistry by "composition of forces." But take mental processes. You would emphasize that cerebration can never be found without physical action in the substance of the brain. Your further analysis then goes to the same estimate "composition of forces." So that on your materialistic idea of the universe, both physical and mental processes of biology are only an elaboration of physics and chemistry, and cognate subjects, like electricity, inclusion of which does not affect the present argument). Therefore your expression "If it were possible" (with "were" italicized) carries a connotation of absolute contradiction of your own philosophy! It is a curious example of your method of argument. It leaves the reader very undecided what you mean—or whether you even know yourself. Your talk of "composition of forces and about life arising substantially like chemical and other phenomena" is sufficient justification for anybody assuming that Materialism assumes that mental processes can receive explanation in physico-chemical terms. Maybe a purist pedant could criticize the word "physico-chemical." But there is not enough wrong with it to quibble about. If you do quibble about it, you let yourself in for the accusation that in your galaxy of "forces," there is one suspiciously like the "vital force" you are so contemptuous of. How many "forces" enter into your "composition"? Do you know? Have you ever thought about it? Have you ever tried to work your phrase into practice? Suppose I ask you: Are there more "forces" in biology than in physics or chemistry. What will you say? If the forces in biology are the same as those in physics, etc., only more elaborately arranged, then mind and mental process can be analysed to receive descriptions in physico-chemical terms. If they are not the same, but what is the use of going on—You don't know. If you had known, your criticism of Prof. Needham would not have been mere verbiage. It would have been a straight forward counter explanation of mind and mental processes. You shirk this issue in your criticism of Mr. Joad, whom you quote as saying, "Until recent years the prevalent view among scientists was that whatever existed in the universe obeyed the laws that were known to operate in the world of matter." You would "dearly like to know what scientist believed or taught that everything that existed in the universe obeyed only the "laws" of matter. Surely (you say) the most materialistic of scientists never denied the laws of

biology? And if they did not, how could they possibly have held that only the laws of matter operated?" Did any one ever hear such quibbling? What are your laws of mechanistic biology—are they not laws of "matter"? You want "matter" to be anything "natural"—you are willing to call it X. You do "restate" it in "forces"—why quibble with Mr. Joad if he uses "matter" in a way quite similar to your own? If you class yourself amongst the scientists, then one of the names you would "dearly like to know," is your own! The Supernaturalist and the Vitalist do say that something else besides the laws of matter operate—biology—but you describe these as "primitive animism." (p. 87.) You say (p. 35) "the essential issue is whether it is possible or ever likely to be possible, to account for the whole range of natural phenomena in terms of composition of forces. That is the principle for which Materialism has always stood. By that principle it stands or falls." Yet on p. 23 you have said there is not the slightest justification for supposing that the form which energy assumes in the universe at large is identical with the specialized form of energy which we find exemplified in living organisms." Of course, if you are going to rely on the word "form" as a get-out, then your statement is only a platitude—namely that "dead" matter has not the same "form" as living matter. But if you mean that there is something essentially different in the energy of this "universe at large," and that in living organisms, then you are stating the Vitalists case—without (in your haste) realizing it. In fact, three sentences further on, the mechanistic Materialist actually says, "Physical energy and vital energy belong to two different scientific categories." This is a restatement of Materialism if you like! But did any one ever know such gross carelessness of language? Mr. Cohen is getting misled by his own careless definition of his ultimate analysis of natural phenomena. His phrase is "composition of forces." It should be compositions of force—one force, the primeval force, the primary "substance." By talking about forces he lets himself in for making "physical" force and "vital" force (or energy) separate and distinct and so gives the show away to the Vitalist.

Consider Mr. Cohen's phrases "energy in the universe at large," and that "exemplified in living organisms." What is the "universe at large"? Does he mean that which is not "living." The specialized form of energy "exemplified" in living organisms—if it is only exemplified there, one supposes it must also be found elsewhere, but where? I suppose (if Mr. Cohen had a larger measure of the gift of definite language there would not be the ever recurring necessity of "supposing") that the energy in the universe at large is what keeps the planets moving, drives the wind and the tides, causes chemical change, demonstrates itself in electric phenomena, and Mr. Cohen says this is different from vital energy. Yet I suppose (again!) that Mr. Cohen would get out of his contradiction of his own theory by saying that when he stated physical and vital energy to be different, he really meant different aspects or manifestations of the same primeval forces—which, however, is something very different. I do not remember that Mr. Cohen actually uses the word Monism. But he evidently is a Monist. The origin of scientific Materialism is in the question the old Greeks asked: "If all things were changing what was the constant eternal thing which formed the substance of it all?" (p. 29.) "The assertion of a primitive substance out of which all things are formed back to which all things go" (p. 30.) It is evidently a following up of this idea when Mr. Cohen says (p. 74) "To assume that life is an expression of some force without any organic re-

lation to other forces is a quite inconceivable proposition." But if so, why all this talk about energy in the universe at large being different from that exemplified in living matter? It is grossly careless. The reader has continually to stop to ask what Mr. Cohen means, and to make a reconciliation (if possible) between statements which, on the face of them are contradictory. An author should not put such a task on his readers.

C. R. BOYD FREEMAN.

Rejoinder.

By CHAPMAN COHEN.

I REGRET that the length of Mr. Boyd Freeman's criticism has compelled me to cut out two or three passages. But these are concerned with Mr. Freeman's impressions of how the book was written and my general style, which really do not touch the substance of *Materialism Re-stated*.

Indeed, had the criticism been concerned with a work other than my own, I should have declined to give so much space to it, on the ground that the critic had not really comprehended either the purpose of the book, or the subject dealt with. But I am naturally loath to shut out a criticism that is directed against myself. I never refuse that so long as there is the least justification for their insertion.

As to my want of clarity and confused thinking, I do not purpose arguing the question. These are not faults with which my readers usually charge me, although I must plead guilty for whatever responsibility rests with me for leaving Mr. Freeman as ill-informed about Materialism after reading my book as he was before he began. How much of this lack of comprehension belongs to me, and how much to Mr. Freeman, I will leave others to decide.

On one point Mr. Freeman does convict me of want of definiteness, if not of clarity. When I said I would welcome a criticism of my book, I ought to have said an informed criticism. I hope that in any similar statement made by me in the future, so much will be taken for granted.

Although all controversy should involve instruction, it is not easy to act as instructor and controversialist towards the same person at once. But in proof of what has been said of Mr. Freeman's non-understanding of Materialism, I will take but one point. Mr. Freeman says, over and over again, that I fall into a gross contradiction in saying that life arose in substantially the same way that chemical and other phenomena made their appearance, and yet rebuking those who say that Materialists ought to explain life and mind in terms of physics and chemistry. The criticism has no other basis than Mr. Freeman's want of acquaintance with elementary scientific principles. In commenting on the remarks of men such as Professor Needham, I never dreamed of committing the impertinence of teaching them the first principles of science; I was merely reminding them of something they had overlooked, as a schoolboy might remind his master of an oversight.

With Mr. Freeman the case is different, and I must explain to him that the position here is that products, whether physical, chemical, or biological, cannot be explained in terms of their factors. If they could be the factors would have, in relation to their products, no function at all. A product of two colliding bodies is heat, but I should be greatly interested in seeing Mr. Freeman explain the sensation of heat in terms of the mechanics of moving bodies. Or he might try and express the quality of wetness in terms of the qualities of oxygen and hydrogen.

There really is no room here for discussion. It is a

matter of elementary science. Products can never be explained in terms of their factors, and no scientist is fool enough to attempt it. Consequently, if life arose from chemical and physical conditions—a probability that few scientific men question to-day—it is as absurd to attempt to explain life in terms of physics and chemistry as it would be to explain the sweetness of sugar in terms of its constituents.

I can assure Mr. Freeman that if he will consult some scientific friend he will find this to be the case. The fashionable theory of "Emergence" is no more than a philosophic statement of it. The chapter on "Causation," in *Materialism Re-stated*, is an elaboration of it. For Mr. Freeman's benefit, I will point out that this chapter is really the pivot of my whole theory. But this Mr. Freeman has not noticed, or has, I fear, failed to comprehend its importance.

Another thing I would suggest to Mr. Freeman is that he should pay some attention to the function of categories in science. (Vahinger's *The Philosophy of 'As If,'* will help him here). When science groups phenomena into classes, its next business is to frame "laws" that will describe their behaviour. (Scientific laws do not "control" things, as Mr. Freeman appears to think). It is in this way that categories are created, and each is in itself ultimate. Thus, a new phenomenon having "emerged" from chemical and other conditions, a new "law" is required to describe its behaviour. That is why science frames laws of physics, laws of chemistry, laws of biology, etc., etc. Here endeth the first lesson, which unless a man grasps he will, without doubt, never understand *Materialism Re-stated*.

Mr. Freeman is so far from understanding what the book is about that he asserts that I deny the truth of Professor Needham's statement that "Mind and mental processes cannot receive explanation or description in chemico-physical terms." (p. 19.) The fallacy, of course, consists in assuming that Materialism must so explain mind. As a matter of fact I actually say (p. 66) that the "statement is one with which I, as a Materialist, cordially agree." For the benefit of Mr. Freeman, other readers have not found the explanation necessary, I may say that these statements were cited to show that the case against Materialism was built up largely by disproving theories which the Materialist does not hold. Mr. Freeman's non-acquaintance with the most elementary principles of scientific method leads him to strange blunders.

Just two or three words in conclusion, but again not in any spirit of controversy. (1) "Laws" of "mechanistic biology" are not "laws" of matter; no one but a fool ever thought they were. (I ought to point out, to Mr. Freeman, that this does not mean that "laws" of matter have ceased to operate in the world of biology.)

(2) If I may judge from my correspondence, and I think if Mr. Freeman was acquainted with the Freethought world he would find it to be so, the book has been of very considerable help in clarifying the minds of Freethinkers, young and old, on the subject of Materialism.

(3) Mr. Freeman thinks my phrase "composition of forces," should read "composition of force." Perhaps I did not use this phrase because I was unable to picture a single force forming a "composition." Mr. Freeman appears to have taken the story of the British soldier who, single-handed, captured a score of German prisoners by surrounding them, too literally.

Wisdom is to become as direct an aim of life and object of teaching as faith and virtue have always been born in the church, and as science is in the modern world.—*Count Hermann Keyserling*.

Society News.

THE second week of Mr. Whitehead's mission in Scotland provided even better meetings than the first.

Two meetings were held in Regent Street, Glasgow and passed off successfully.

The Sunday meeting at Alexandra Gate seemed to produce a very favourable impression, and the necessary touch of humour was provided by a platform opponent who tried to reconcile Genesis with Evolution. He satisfied nobody but himself.

The Partick meeting again claimed the attention of the crowd, which before we arrived had been listening to a political speaker, and at question time our speaker apparently got the heckling which had been prepared for the other. A feature of Scottish audiences is their tendency to try to turn every meeting into a wrangle on economic problems, and to accuse the speaker of "twisting" who refuses to indulge their desires. The other three meetings of the week were held at Paisley, and gratifying results were obtained if size of crowds, keenness of interest, sales of literature and inquiries for membership forms are any indication. A Branch is expected as the outcome of these meetings, and quite a number of keen young men were present who should make it a live one. One thousand copies of the syllabus of the winter lectures were distributed as well as a number of *Freethinkers*. We have to thank Messrs. Hewin, Christie, MacKay and Clark, as well as the Partick supporters for their valuable assistance at the meetings in Scotland. From September 28 to October 4, Mr. Whitehead is in the Darlington area.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

LONDON.

INDOOR.

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1): 11.0, C. Delisle Burns, M.A., D.Lit.—"America and Civilization."

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.

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

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.

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

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH: N.S.S.—Friday, October 4, Liverpool Street, Camberwell Gate, Mr. L. Ebury.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Clapham Common): 11.30, A Lecture; 3.15, "Bradlaugh" Demonstration, Speakers: Messrs. Mann, Corrigan and Saphin; Brockwell Park, 6.0, Mr. F. Mann—"Charles Bradlaugh."

WEST HAM BRANCH N.S.S. (Outside Technical College, Romford Road, Stratford, E.): 7.0, Mrs. E. Venton—A Lecture.

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

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE BRANCH N.S.S. (Socialist Club, Arcade, Pilgrim Street): 3.0, Members Meeting.

OUTDOOR.

LIVERPOOL (Merseyside) BRANCH N.S.S. (Beaumont Street): Monday, September 30, at 7.30, Mr. J. V. Short—A Lecture. Tuesday, Edge Hill Lamp, at 8.0, Mr. P. Sherwin—A Lecture.

DARLINGTON AND DISTRICT N.S.S.—Mr. George Whitehead will lecture from September 28 to October 4. On Sunday, at Market Steps, Darlington, at 7.0. Will friends please note that all meetings will commence at 7 p.m.

Mr. J. CLAYTON will lecture at the following places : Friday, September 27, Crawshawbooth, 7.45; Sunday, 29, King's Hall, Accrington, Public Debate: "That Science and Religion are in Harmony." Affir: Rev. W. Priestly; Neg.: Mr. J. Clayton, N.S.S. Commence at 8 p.m., Monday, September 30, IHigham (by request), 7.30.

LIVERPOOL (Merseyside) BRANCH N.S.S. (Top Room, Royal Buildings, 18 Colquitt Street, off Bold Street): Sunday, October 6, at 7.30, Dr. C. H. R. Carmichael—"What is Freethought?" This is the opening lecture of the 1929-30 Winter Session, and it is hoped that there will be a good rally of local friends and sympathizers. A copy of the complete Winter syllabus can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, Mr. S. R. A. Ready, at any of the Sunday evening meetings, or at 28 Bank Road, Bootle, Lancs.

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Secretary: MR. R. H. ROSETTI.

THIS Society was formed in 1898 to afford legal security to

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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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