

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE.

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Views and Opinions.

Marriage and Divorce.

If one wishes for a crucial example of the unadulterated nuisance religion in general and Christianity in particular is when social questions are on the carpet, one may find it in the discussions going on concerning marriage and divorce. The important thing about marriage, and the one that should govern consideration, is its social aspect. And the fundamental fact of this social aspect is the family and the perpetuation of the race. Whatever secondary and tertiary developments may take place with regard to the relations of the sexes, however much mere sexual attraction may be sublimated into love, this fact remains true. The attractions of sex is nature's lure for the perpetuation of the race. Apart from children it need be no concern of the State on what condition men and women choose to live together. In fact, it is of no concern to the State. The State does not say that a man may not live with one woman or more, or a woman live with one man or more, on whatever conditions they please. It does not even say that they may not beget children as the fruit of such unions. All it says is that if the State is asked to enforce a contract between two persons, then the contract must be one to which it is a party, and it lays down the main lines of the contracts it will enforce. Up to that point everything is quite clear. It is the child that creates the problem; it is the child, and all that the child involves that is least talked about. But for the child there would be no reason at all for marriage laws. Social opinion is quite another question. That is often more drastic than legal enactment, and badly needs education.

Man and Society.

Now a sanely civilized society would recognize marriage laws and marriage customs as social facts to be discussed along lines of social service or disservice. Laws and customs of marriage that best serve the interests of all concerned are the best, and there is no

other reasonable basis for discussion. To talk of any institution as "sacred," meaning that it must be neither modified nor destroyed, is downright nonsense, and treason to the real interests of Society. Either in theory or in fact changes take place, and are generally the more unpleasant because theory does not admit their legitimacy. Make it a crime to question the powers of a king and an axe, or a bullet, settles the problem. Make marriage the one contract between human beings that must be neither modified nor cancelled and both men and women find irregular, and often unpleasant ways out of the difficulty. The contract is cancelled in fact, while remaining uncanceled in theory. No power on earth, and we need not bother about power anywhere else, can compel a man and a woman to be loyal to each other if the affection that is the cement and the essence of the union, no longer exists. Whether a man and a woman can live together in terms of affection and mutual esteem that man and woman alone can tell, and if it is impossible real marriage has ceased to be. The State in such cases does not annul marriage, it merely sets its signature to an amendment that already exists.

So also with the question of children. Whether a man and woman have one child, a number of children, of no children at all, is their business, and theirs alone. It is useless talking about a decline of population, or the evils of a stationary one. A stationary population is an evil only to politicians and militarists who count the value of men and women in terms of soldier power or in terms of the capacity to beat down other nations; or to Roman Catholic priests who wish to see men and women breeding like rabbits, and for exactly the same reason that stock-breeders like to see an increase in their cattle. As Ruskin said, it is not a vital question whether a man have one child or six children. But it is a vital question whether the children he has deserve to be hanged or not.

* * *

The Plight of Religion.

The whole question might be sensibly discussed and solved with comparative ease but for the intrusion of religion. From that fog of superstition which shrouds all institutions in their earlier stages marriage is the last to emerge. For various reasons woman in her fundamental functional aspects is a special object of superstitious dread, and her relations, as woman with man, has to be surrounded with a number of precautions against supernatural dangers. For this reason the priest, the medicine man, obtained a fairly solid grip on the institution of marriage, and vested interest has prompted him to fight hard to retain it. In our own times marriage and the child represent his last remaining hope. In social and scientific affairs his grasp is palpably weakening, so much so that large numbers of priests no longer claim supremacy there; they are content if they can be ad-

mitted to the rank as students on a level term with others. But when the question of marriage or divorce or birth control is raised, we at once find the clergy rushing in with talk about what Our Lord said, as though anything could equal the stupidity of going back a couple of thousand years to see what a mythical celibate had to say about family relations, to settle the question for men and women living to-day! Not alone do a number of celibate and other priests set themselves up as the final authorities on marriage and divorce, but our glorious press, with its determination to support anything established, and its resolve to do nothing and say nothing that can offend the most stupid of its subscribers, appeal to the clergy for their opinion on marriage as though their claim for supremacy was beyond question.

* * *

What is Legal Marriage?

In all these discussions much is said about marriage being a religious institution. Marriage is nothing of the kind. Biologically it has nothing to do with religion. Sociologically it has nothing to do with religion. And, legally, in this country at least, it has nothing to do with religion. The only legal marriage in this country is the civil marriage. It is true that marriages are performed in a Church, and that a parson is the official who "ties the knot." But that is by the way. The parson performs the marriage because he receives a licence from the secular State to do so, precisely as a Registrar has his authority from the same source. For legal purposes the Church simply takes the place of the Registry Office. The Church is recognized as a place in which marriages may be performed just as a Registry Office is recognized. The religious ceremonies that accompany the marriage are of no more legal consequence than jumping over a broomstick. The proof of this is that while the religious ceremonies differ, and are permitted to differ, the secular part must remain unaltered. So far as the legal marriage is concerned the parson, with the authority of the State, for the time being, and for the purpose of the marriage, takes the place of the Registrar.

Moreover, the Church, having been licenced as a place in which marriages can be performed by a person licenced by the State to perform them, and by such a person only, no citizen, whatever his opinions can legally be denied the right of a Church marriage. An Atheist has as much right to be married there as anyone else. I do not know that any particular parson could be compelled to marry him, but another might be found, and it is an open question of how far an action in the Courts might compel some parson, probably a bishop—if the bishop declined to compel one of his subordinates to act. The parson is not appointed by the State, and so the State may not be able to compel him honestly to perform the duties for which he is paid. In any case the fact, the vital fact, is that when a clergyman talks of a religious marriage, the reply is that no such marriage is recognized by English law. There are marriages accompanied with religious ceremonies, but that is another question. And in Scotland, marriage is so clearly a civil contract that marriage before witnesses is, I believe, still legally recognized.

* * *

Clear Out the Priests.

In any case, if we wish to see such subjects as Marriage, Divorce, or Birth-control discussed reasonably, or settled profitably, we must clear religious influences out of the way. It is a pity that those who stand forward as reformers in these matters do not say so plainly and boldly. I do not say it is a pity they do not see this, because to say as much would be a reflection on their intelligence. But there is often

a long step between ceasing to believe in religion, and ceasing to be afraid of its malignant activities. Every one of the questions touched on—Marriage, Divorce, Birth-control, has found its bitterest, its most ignorant, and its most intolerant opposition in those who were animated by religious belief. With everyone of these questions the trail had to be blazed by Free thinkers before it could be discussed in the light of a more or less complete publicity. Rational ideas of marriage and divorce and of the conscious control of population owe the publicity they have to-day, and the more enlightened opinion that prevails, to the Freethinkers of the past who saw, and said, that the influence of religion must be curtailed if advance was to be made. And that statement is as true to-day and as pertinent to-day as ever it was. If the essence of marriage is mutual love and respect, let us have a little less of the policeman in the picture, whether he wears the familiar dress of the "bobby," or the black gown of the priest. Where love and respect have no existence the outlook for the man, the woman, and the child is black and bad. If man is ever to become really master of his own destiny, it cannot be a crime for him to say whether he shall have one child or a dozen. But such subjects must be discussed with the priest shut out if we are ever to reach reasonable and healthful conclusions. It is the health and happiness of men and women with which we are concerned. The opinions of gods and Church Councils are interesting only so far as they help to illustrate the aberrations of which the human mind is capable.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

The Sin of the Shingle.

"Surely, as there are mountebanks for the national body, as there are mountebanks for the politic body, men that undertake great cures, and perhaps have been lucky in two or three experiments, but want the grounds of science, and therefore cannot hold out."—Francis Bacon.

ACCORDING to the Christian Scheme, the direst calamity that has ever overtaken the human race was the fall of man. This is said to have arisen from an act of petty larceny by one, Eve, surname from an committed in the Garden of Eden, umpteen years ago. A modern magistrate would have bound the offender over, a country squire, sitting on a provincial bench, might have sentenced the culprit to fourteen days in a little room. But divine justice is a very different thing from human jurisprudence as the Christian Bible proves in almost every chapter.

The results of this paltry offence almost beggar description. In the language of the austere John Milton, it "brought death into the world, and all our woe." In plain English, Eve and her male associate were sentenced to death. Not only this, but their descendants for all time were also sentenced to death. To make the punishment fit the crime, all the ill attendant upon mortality were added, perhaps, as a humanitarian afterthought. These are by no means negligible, for they range from housemaid's knee to hydrophobia. Even small children have to bear their share, for there are two hundred diseases incidental to the years of adolescence. As for the "grown-ups," a mere list of human afflictions would make a good-sized volume, and the best book on theology extant.

To pursue this fearful subject would be cruel, but for the fact that another crime has been committed which rivals the misdemeanour in Eden. So declares a "man-of-God," who should be more fully acquainted with divine matters than mere mortals, who only pay their pew-rents, or stay outside the churches. The Rev. C. F. Aspinwall, Vicar of St Bartholomew's Church, Southsea, has voiced his

grievance in his parish magazine. In the current issue he condemns the modern fashion which has led women to cut off their hair. My hand trembles as I transcribe the fateful words:—

"It is the greatest sin committed by women since Eve took the apple in Eden. It is the historic crime against beauty. It is the fall of woman to the dismal level of man.

"Can anyone imagine a woman less like what God intended her to appear than with a short-cropped head, horn-rimmed spectacles, a man's waistcoat, arms burned a nasty copper colour like a dago, socks like a comic child in a pantomime, or stockings like a draughtboard or a bookie's waistcoat."

It is "too deep for tears." If a twopenny apple led to all the horrors attendant upon the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, what may we not expect from the shilling shingle, and the eighteen-penny Eton crop? I don't care a bean concerning a woman falling "to the dismal level of man." A lodging-house landlady has not to fall far to reach the level of the average publican, and a peroxide-haired barmaid is not more resplendent than the imitation nobleman in spats on the other side of the counter. Women may wear tailor-made clothes, but men wear all the colours of the rainbow nowadays.

The reverend gentleman's argument concerning women being less like what "God" intended them to appear is a boomerang-argument. It comes back with a bang, especially in the case of a priest. A bishop is a man, but when he is rigged out in his best clothes, which, incidentally, cost a large sum, he looks uncommonly like a stained-glass window figure. Crozier, mitre, robes, gaiters, and dog-collar, he is as unlike his fellow-men as it is possible to imagine. He is as unlike other citizens from a sartorial point of view, as he is remote from other people mentally.

Brother Aspinwall declares that women have committed sexual suicide by removing their hair. Does a man commit "sexual suicide" by having a shave, or by cultivating a Charlie Chaplin moustache? Is a man less godly if he sprouts mutton-chop whiskers than if he displays Santa Claus fungus on his face? Priests have the quaintest of quaint notions on this subject. Roman Catholic priests shave part of their heads as well as their faces, and Greek ecclesiastics cultivate whiskers which would put Father Christmas to the blush, and make a Mexican bronchopulver die of envy. Some of the higher Greek Church ecclesiastics, judging by photographs, appear to harbour birds' nests in their whiskers, a matter that ought to be referred to the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, which seems to imagine that the animal kingdom includes only horses and dogs, with an occasional tortoise thrown in.

To refer to the "shingle" and the "bingle" as "sexual suicide" is nonsense. A "permanent wave" is quite as attractive as "a bun," a "chignon" or the pigtail; beloved of the schoolgirls of other times, and of the almond-eyed followers of Confucius. Why does the Rev. C. F. Aspinwall use such highly-coloured language? There is very little to do with "sexual suicide," but it has very little to do with such a trivial matter as hair, short or long. Enforced celibacy is countenanced by the most powerful of the Christian Churches. Europe is as full of monasteries and nunneries as a pudding is full of plums. Even in this Protestant country of ours there are far too many such institutions, and so powerful are the priests that these places are not liable to inspection by Government officials or police.

Indeed, the number of religious houses is liable to increase, because the Roman Catholic Church is actually growing in numbers and power. In addition, sixty per cent of the English State Church priests are

Anglo-Catholics, which really means that they are Papists in dominos. So serious has the position become in this respect that Anglican priests have less chance of any form of preferment if they are not Ritualists. If Mr. Aspinwall is seriously interested in such things as "sexual suicide" let him leave female hairdressing alone and devote what talents he possesses to criticizing the growth of a celibate priesthood and the multiplication of religious houses where "the last enchantments of the Middle Ages" are muttered in Twentieth-Century England under an alleged Democratic Government.

This ancient tale of "Eve and the apple" is a story designed to show the awful consequences of disobedience to an alleged divine command. It has been imposed on a hundred generations of the human family by priests bent on asserting their own authority and feathering their own nests. Even to-day, when Freethinkers have demonstrated the legendary nature of such rubbish, this Christian priest refers to it as if it were a fact, and the apple as real as a Ribston pippin. The research and scholarship of two centuries is no more to him than the snows of yester-year. "I had rather be a dog and bay the moon than such a Roman."

The story of "Eve and the apple" is a legend, but the powerful Christian Churches are a reality. Together they employ no less than sixty thousand priests who devote their whole time to fostering superstition. They absorb millions of money which might be far more usefully employed. In educational matters these priests are powerful. In politics, thanks to the Bench of Bishops in the House of Lords, they hold the balance of power. All this happens under a Democratic Government, and the average citizen hardly realizes that this country is more priestridden than some Continental countries.

An Army riding instructor, well known for his uncanny skill in training horsemen, used to shout to the recruits: "Keep your heads up, and keep your hindquarters down." It was excellent advice for ordinary citizens no less than soldiers. When there are priests about it is always better to keep your head erect than to grovel.

MIMNERMUS.

The Kreutzer Sonata.

(Concluded from page 619.)

SOON after their marriage Pozdnishéf and his wife began to quarrel. "Love," he says, "vanished with the satisfaction of the senses," and as time went on, their quarrels became more frequent and bitter; until, he says, "We were like two galley slaves attached to the same cannon-ball; execrating one another, poisoning one another's existence." At that time, he says, "I was still unaware of the fact that ninety-nine married couples out of a hundred live in this hell, our existence became more ignoble than ever."

Then, he proceeds, "My wife was unwell, and those scoundrels, the doctors, forbade her to have any more children, and gave her advice in this direction." He protested, but his wife sided with the doctors; and so, he declares: "The last justification of the life we wretches were leading was now removed, and our existence became more ignoble than ever."

The advice given by "these scoundrels," he says, turned out well, his wife renewed her youth; "She had acquired that provoking beauty which appeals to men. She had all the brilliancy of the woman of thirty who no longer bears children, lives well, and is excitable. The very sight of her inspired alarm."

Then the man appeared upon the scene. This man, whose name was Troukhachevsky, had been an intimate friend of Pozdnishéfs. Displaying a talent

for music, his father had sent him to the Paris Conservatoire, where he became a skilful violinist. He had "Soft, almond-shaped eyes, red lips, always smiling; a little waxed moustache." Very polite and insinuating, with all the polished manners acquired by a residence in Paris. This man, with his music, says Pozdnishéf, was the cause of everything.

He called on them in Moscow and Pozdnishéf invited him to bring his violin the same evening, to join his wife, who was a good performer on the piano. He played in marvellous style: "Scarcely had he begun to play," says Pozdnishéf, "than his face changed. He became serious and much more interesting. He was, it need hardly be said, a much better player than my wife; and he helped her simply and naturally, while at the same time he spoke with courtesy of her playing." Upon leaving, he was invited to dinner on the following Sunday; but two or three days later Pozdnishéf arrived home to find them at the piano. After the violinist had left, there was a fearful quarrel, which, however, they patched up, and Troukhachevsky duly appeared on the Sunday. They played The Kreutzer Sonata of Beethoven, which is composed for the violin and piano. "Do you know the opening presto?" asks Pozdnishéf, uttering a sigh and remaining silent. "A terrible thing, this sonata," he went on; "and music is a terrible thing generally. . . . People say that music elevates the soul. Nonsense; falsehood. It exercises an influence, a frightful influence—I speak for myself—but not of an ennobling kind. It neither ennobles nor degrades; it excites."

Although Tolstoy named the story, *The Kreutzer Sonata*, that is, practically, all he has to say about it. But it was a good title, in that it excited a great deal of curiosity, which a religious title would have repelled. Strange to say, no one else, so far as we are aware, has been able to find any sensuality in this piece of music. Mr. Fausset, most indulgent of critics, observes:—

He [Tolstoy] projected his own sensuality into all art which disturbed him physically. And how morbid his response was, may be judged by his interpretation of *The Kreutzer Sonata* itself, the finale of which, he is reported by his son once to have said, "simply expresses sensuality."

To the present writer at least it expresses a pure lyrical frivolity, touched indeed with coquetry but innocent of the slightest suggestion of grossness.¹¹

The fact is the sensuality was not in the music. It was in Tolstoy.

A few days after this Pozdnishéf had to leave home for a few days, to attend the Legislative Assembly. Upon the second day he was away, he received a letter from his wife to say that Troukhachevsky had called to leave some music he had promised, but that she had declined his offer to play. Seized with jealousy and suspicion, Pozdnishéf immediately starts to return. He arrives at his house at one o'clock in the morning. The windows of the drawing, and reception rooms, were lighted up.

Choosing a curved dagger, with an extremely sharp Damascus blade, from several arranged ornamentally on the wall of the ante-chamber, he entered the dining-room. They were seated at the table. Without asking an explanation, he threw himself upon his wife and there ensued a terrible struggle with all three, and in the end he succeeded in thrusting the dagger in her left side. Before noon she was dead. The story ends: "You now know my experiences, and if you and other people could only understand the real meaning of St. Matthew's words, when he speaks of a man looking upon a woman with the eye of desire; for his words are applicable to a woman in a

fraternal sense—not only to the wife of another man, but especially to one's own wife."

At once there arose an animated discussion as to the meaning, or moral, of the story. Some held that it was merely a story, and that there was no moral intended. The religious contended that Tolstoy's purpose was to show what debauchery before marriage led to. Others declared that Tolstoy's intention was to illustrate the iniquity of the marriage contract which compelled a couple to live together after love had departed; and interpreted it as a plea for free-love. They were all wide of the mark. Tolstoy himself received a large number of letters of inquiry upon the subject. Shocked at the free-love interpretation, Tolstoy hastened to make clear his position, which he did in a widely circulated publication, *The Universal Review* (June, 1890). He intended to "tell the world," as the Americans say; and to an astonished world he declared that all sexual connexion, or indulgence, was immoral and a sin. Whether the parties were single or married! Marriage was merely licensed adultery. He declares:—

There is not and cannot be such an institution as Christian marriage. . . . This is what was always taught and believed by true Christians of the first and following centuries. . . . In the eyes of a Christian, sexual relations in marriage not only do not constitute a lawful, right, and happy state, as our society and our churches maintain, but, on the contrary, are always a fall, a weakness, a sin. Such a thing as Christian marriage never was and never could be. Christ did not marry; neither did his disciples marry. . . . A Christian, I say, cannot view sexual intercourse otherwise than as a deviation from the doctrine of Christ—as a sin. This is clearly laid down in Matt. v. 28, and the ceremony called Christian marriage does not alter its character one jot. A Christian will never, therefore, desire marriage, but will always avoid it.

To those who put the question: "How about the human race? If we admit that celibacy is better and nobler than marriage, and that the aim of humanity is to strive after chastity." There would soon be no human race left to strive. To this Tolstoy retorts: "To that I reply that the argument is not mine; I did not invent it. That it is incumbent on mankind to strive, and that celibacy is preferable to marriage, are truths revealed by Christ nineteen hundred years ago, set forth in our catechisms and professed by us as followers of Christ. In the Gospel it is laid down so clearly as to make it impossible to explain it away." As Zweig observes:—

How strange a spectacle! Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, the greatest Russians of their day, are suddenly smitten with apocalyptic terrors, lay aside their work, and uplift a Russian cross, both of them appealing to Christ (though to different Christs) as saviour of a dying world. Like frienizied medieval monks, they stand in their pulpits, hostile each to the other in spirit as in their lives. Dostoevsky is an arch-reactionary, a defender of the autoeracy. . . . Tolstoy no less fanatically scorns what Dostoevsky admires, is mystically anarchistic, just as Dostoevsky is mystically servile, stigmatizing the Tsar as an assassin, Church and State as robbers, and fulminating against war. He likewise has the name of Christ on his lips and holds the New Testament in his hand. Both of them are reactionaries who, urged onward by fears that well up from within, would fain push the world back into humility and mental hebetude.¹²

We are assured that if we adopt the teaching of Christ, and endeavour to follow in his footsteps, that we shall attain peace and happiness. Tolstoy never

¹¹ Fausset Tolstoy: *The Inner Drama*. p. 267.

¹² Stefan Zweig: *Adepts in Self-Portraiture*. p. 317.

attained either. The Countess, his wife, said to him: "You used to say you were uneasy because you had no faith. Why, then are you not happy now?" (p. 289.)

As Zweig observes: "After the 'awakening,' as before, his uneasy spirit was overshadowed, gloomy, prone to self-torment. Tolstoy was not born to be contented" (p. 292.) The life of Tolstoy is a standing witness to the incompatibility of Christianity with modern progress and Civilization.

How the publication of *The Kreutzer Sonata* affected the Countess, we learn from the extracts taken from her later Diary, now appearing weekly in *The Nation and Athenæum*.

Under the date, February 12, 1891, she writes:—

In my own heart I have felt that this story was directed against me; it has wounded me and disgraced me in the eyes of the whole world, and has destroyed the last remnant of love between us. And all this in spite of the fact that I never did anything wrong during my whole married life, and never looked at any other man!

W. MANN.

Prehistoric Times in Eastern England.

Any archaeological essay from the pen of that progressive anthropologist, Mr. J. Reid Moir, merits attention. Among his many valuable contributions to the study of early humanity his *Antiquity of Man in East Anglia* occupies a prominent position. The volume is handsomely illustrated with twenty-five plates, and 153 text figures.

In his opening chapter on "The Pleasures of Hunt Hunting," he justly claims that the recent deposits of Norfolk and Suffolk represent a veritable treasure house to those who are interested in the rise and progress of the human race. Independent as ever, Reid Moir queries the current view that the veritable of mankind need of necessity have been either in Asia, or as Darwin surmised, in Africa. In his concluding chapter entitled the "Place of Origin and the Progress of Man," when referring to the American expedition which is seeking the site of man's emergence in Mongolia, Moir states that "Asia is still a veritable *terra incognita* to prehistorians, and it is possible that the habit of looking upon it as the place of man's origin is partly because, in the words of Sir Arthur Keith, it is part of the world 'of which we know almost nothing, and therefore can believe it capable of anything.'"

Be that as it may, however, it is demonstrable that East Anglian deposits have already yielded an astonishingly complete record of nearly every stage of man's development from primordial times. "Thus, it is possible," argues our author, "that what is now England was the home of our earliest men, and there can be little doubt that if a tithe of the money spent upon researches in other parts of the world were expended upon archaeological work in England, still further and more important discoveries, bearing upon the question of man's origin would be made."

The earliest remains of man's handiwork were first discovered in Kent. Standing on the North Downs and gazing towards the coast, the famous Weald of Kent stretches before us. The North Downs ascend to a height of 700 feet above sea level, and on a bright day the South Downs are visible in the distance. Many milleniums ago the beautiful valley now known as the Weald was occupied by a land surface which stood at least as high as the Downs do today. But the action of running water and other physical forces have slowly eroded the present valley,

while the Downs remain on either side. In ancient river gravel in this region the most primitive implements of man were discovered. These are the much controverted Eoliths—the Stones of the Dawn—which were made known to science by that sagacious amateur, the late W. B. Harrison.

So extremely crude are most of these flint implements that some experts denied their human origin. It was asserted that they might have been, and probably were produced, by the blind forces of Nature. Compared with the later highly finished artifacts of the Old and New Stone Ages they are primitive enough. Yet, from the evolutionary standpoint, these rugged implements are precisely what the dispassionate inquirer must expect to find. An ape-like people were presumably trying their 'prentice hands in producing coarsely flaked, cutting, scraping, and hacking implements.

In Eolithic times, perhaps more than a million years ago, the land surface which covered what is now the Weald enjoyed a hot climate. Many animals, long since extinct, dwelt there. Immense mammoth-like creatures, fierce carnivores, wild horses and many ruminants, with a wondrous array of bird life, haunted the streams and marshes, and wandered in the woods. Competition in life's struggle was doubtless keen, but primitive man's superior brain, and his use of the forefoot as a hand materially contributed to the success of the semi-human creature whose descendants dominate the globe.

Although the Kentish Eoliths are extremely ancient, the gravels in which they were discovered are of uncertain geological date. When, however, Reid Moir detected the presence of Eoliths in Suffolk in a bone-bed beneath the Red Crag, this provided conclusive evidence of man's existence in East Anglia at a remotely distant date. The Red Crag itself was formed in early Quaternary times, and the deposit which yielded the Eoliths was laid down long before the Red Crag. Moreover, these Eoliths had plainly been transported to the site of their discovery, and this suggests a long anterior history.

Reid Moir claims that these ancient implements are not only the oldest known handiwork of man, but that they also represent the foundation forms of all succeeding flint artifacts. Also, he has traced from specimens collected from the ascending East Anglian strata, the evolution of the Eoliths into the later sub-Crag implements, and these again into the refined artifacts of Palæolithic times, and onwards to the latest products of the Neolithic Age.

In a deposit which predates the erosion of the Gipping Valley in Suffolk, Reid Moir found a series of curious flint implements closely resembling the Eoliths met with in Kent. These were scornfully rejected at the time by many archaeologists, but their authenticity is now more generally conceded.

When the Tertiary Period had ended some half million years ago, Suffolk was the scene of tropical or sub-tropical life. The county was then a wide plain of woodland and scrub, well watered with lakes and streams. The mammoth and the hipparion, the famous three-toed horse; wild pigs and tapirs, hyænas and others were among the fauna of the time. Man, himself, long dwelt in the land. Then came the time when the soil slowly sank beneath the level of the sea. During this gradual subsidence, the waste matters of the land, swept by the currents to the ocean, transported the remains of organisms and the implements of man which were left stranded in hollows and depressions where they reposed until their recovery by modern man.

The base of the Old Red Crag formation in Suffolk, which lies beneath the Glacial deposits, itself rests

on the older beds of London Clay. This stratum is rich in fossil remains, and in 1910 Reid Moir discovered flints once used by man. These implements were more skilfully contrived than the Eoliths, and, as we might infer, there was proof of progress. For the uses to which these artifacts were put are plainly more numerous than those of earlier design. The most remarkable of these flints were so shapen at one end that the beak of a predatory bird at once suggests itself. Some of these artifacts are of considerable size and provided powerful weapons to the men who used them.

Reid Moir's announcement of his discovery was coldly received in certain quarters. But he won a bold and uncompromising adherent in the late Ray Lankester. As Prof. Osborn says in his all too brief obituary notice of Lankester in *Nature*, "I consider Lankester's warm support of Reid Moir's excavations and his courageous advocacy of the *human origin and manufacture* of these primordial flints, against the incredulous and indifferent attitude of the reigning archæologists of the day, one of the most striking evidences of the independence of his judgment and of his powers of observation." And the term "rostro-carinate," which Lankester coined to designate these beak-like implements, is now universally accepted.

In answer to the objections that the rostro-carinates were produced by earth pressure, and that they were suspiciously numerous in East Anglian deposits, the antiquary, Mr. J. E. Sainty, in his recent address to the Prehistoric Society of East Anglia, stated, as reported in the *Times*, that: "A statistical investigation of the undisturbed 'stone bed' showed that rostro-carinates were distinctly scarce, averaging less than one in 2,000 of the flints *in situ* in the bed. Deep excavations showed that the 'stone bed,' resting directly on the chalk, beneath undisturbed Crag sands, itself contained numerous unbroken shells of so fragile a nature that the slightest disturbance of the beds would have fractured them. In addition, not a single instance was found of the occurrence together of the flint flake and its core. Such would certainly have been found if these flakes had been produced by the pressure of the overlying strata."

There is a similar deposit to that of Suffolk in the neighbouring county—the Norfolk Crag—and a still earlier formation has yielded the fossils of animals, as well as worked flints. This indicates a greater antiquity of man than that previously supposed. It is stated that, to the expert eye, these Norfolk implements are readily distinguishable from those of Suffolk.

These flints were made in a remote age. For there is clear evidence that the deposit that contained them, has, since its formation, slowly risen above, and fallen below the level of the sea, at several successive periods. It also embraces three lengthy Glacial Ages, with prolonged intervals, when a sub-tropical climate prevailed. Many animals then living have long since been extinct. Thus far, no human remains have appeared in this deposit, but they may at any moment be revealed.

About 100,000 years later the men of the Cromer Forest Bed lived. The Norfolk of these days was very different to the present county. Where the waves of the North Sea now roll, and the Cliffs of the Cromer Coast now stand, there ran a wide river valley populated by a great array of animal life, and occupied by a Stone Age hunting race. This remote-time valley was that of a northern extension of the Rhine, and this running stream slowly deposited the Cromer Forest Bed. The leading deposits lie around Cromer and form the repository of the petrified remains of the ancient forest which flourished

where Norfolk now stands. The plant fossils indicate a similar flora to that of contemporary East Anglia. Yet, the transformation in the animal domain is great indeed. The fossils of three distinct species of elephant, the ferocious sabre-toothed tiger, giant bears and beavers, many other exotic organisms, and, above all, a monkey have been discovered. The general surroundings then prevalent proved favourable to man, who was well provided with flints for his implements, and was richly supplied with game. Once more, we have proofs of progress since Eolithic and pre-Crag times. The large size of the artifacts of this period suggests that the men who made and used them were of powerful build. Human remains of this age await discovery, but Reid Moir thinks that the immense Heidelberg jaw-bone which was recovered from strata of similar date to that of Cromer, probably belonged to a member of the race whose artifacts are found in the forest Bed of Cromer.

T. F. PALMER.

Mind and Mastication.

THERE is one part of Professor Eddington's argument against the interference, so to speak, of science in psychological matters which will repay a little closer examination than was possible in the wide and able survey which has appeared in the editorial columns of this journal.

The point in question occurs where he says that whereas a physical machine chaws up whatever is fed to it according to the laws of its physical nature, a human, psychical, machine, does not. Without stopping to analyse the process indicated by the verb *to chew*, let us take the general intention of the argument, which seems to be that whereas the result of the chawing in the case of the machine is predictable the result in the case of the mind is not. Now, taking any single machine and thus contrasting it with any single brain, the differentiation is undoubtedly true. But it is a curious phenomenon that the measure of the differentiation grows less and less as you multiply the number of machines and brains respectively and consider them collectively.

Let us restate Professor Eddington's argument as follows. "Whereas in the case of the *total engineering equipment* of this country the result of feeding it with certain materials is predictable, the result of doing the same thing to the *population* of this country is not." But it is and to a tremendously high degree of accuracy. The proof is that one of the largest and most lucrative professions in the world depends on its being true; namely Advertising.

An experienced publicity expert is able not only to tell you that one type of advertising will pull more orders from the same group of prospective buyers than another, but also to give you a pretty good approximation of the size of the difference. Take, for instance, a mere point of detail, namely the respective pulling-power of an advertisement that contains a coupon to be filled in and returned, and one that does not. It has been found by repeated experiment that the first is better than the second under equal conditions; and not only that, but the two comparative pulling-powers can be expressed as an arithmetical ratio, with a relatively small margin of error. And, as for advertising in general, it is a matter of common knowledge that "getting results" is merely a matter of putting enough money down—or as Professor Eddington might say, buying sufficient suitable *publicity materials for the public to chew*.

It may be retorted that, in spite of all this, advertisers often guess wrong. But when they do the miscalculation can be shown to arise from hundreds of

circumstances that have nothing to do with that wanton, wayward, spoiled child of the theologians—the Free will. At the very least the Materialist has the right to say that if an *individual* mind is not subject to general laws, neither should be a *group* of minds. And even allowing to the group-mind a certain small element of waywardness incapable of explanation, this does not help Professor Eddington's case. For only last week the present writer was told of exactly the same waywardness about machines. The machines in point were steam turbines, and the statement was made, by one of the most experienced experts in their manufacture, that you can take any two of these mechanisms, and you can verify their exact likeness in structure and size by the most delicate analyses and measurements that science has been able to discover; and yet they will rotate at different speeds under exactly the same steam-pressure and other conditions. Nobody would dream of attributing the phenomenon to non-physical lawlessness, even though no physical explanation might be forthcoming. Yet he would have a better right to do so than students of other orders of phenomena, because investigation has proceeded so much further in the physical field.

Life is short; and the conundrums which Nature puts to us must be reserved in order of priority. Those whose solution was vital to mankind's terrestrial security and comfort had to be attended to first. It has taken a long time to get down the list so far as we have, and there may be much more to be done before scientists can spare time to go into the problem of mankind's celestial security. In the meantime, the plain man will be best advised to base his conduct on what has been made known by scientific methods. While being tolerant of all speculations about what is yet to be discovered, he must see that none of these speculations impose on him the obligation to support their beliefs or act in accordance with them.

Let him conceive of "God" as the receptacle into which mankind stores its unknowns at night for Science to explore in the morning. Packing all its puzzles in the Old Kit Bag.

MECHANIST.

Acid Drops.

Somewhat or the other Christian preachers appear to be blurring out a great deal of the truth just now, and it is rather fortunate for them that the majority of their listeners do not appear to understand the full significance of what they say. This may be due to the habit of listening to a sermon as something that is not to be criticized. For example, the Rev. J. C. Hardwick, speaking at the Modern Churchmen's Conference, on September 25, said that religion had become an ornamental frilling to life, and nothing more. Religion had claimed to give supernatural information about science, history and ethics. But where the information was true the truth was regarded as having been reached by natural means, and religion became redundant because it was giving that which could be reached without it. That is precisely what we have said over and over again. Where religion has said something true, the truth was independent of it. Where it gave any other kind of message, it was found to be false. And now sensible persons are finding it out.

On the same day, speaking in London, the Bishop of Chelmsford said "Anglo-Saxons will live a life which is moral, helpful, and brotherly, but in which God has no place, unless they are provided with outward and visible Christian manifestations in the shape of churches." What then do the Churches give? Certainly not knowledge, and there is nothing in any way, so far as we can see—save providing jobs for the parsons.

It is rather difficult to credit that all those who write and talk about the magical power of Bible reading to keep people "good" actually believe what they say. There is, of course, the example of the number of completely healthy lumbags and actual criminals who have been great readers of the Bible, although one cannot expect such simple facts as those to disprove the belief in the magic of the Bible. They will reply that all these are cases where the Bible has failed, but what of the others that have not failed? And, as the *Express* says does not the King read a chapter of the Bible every day? So also did the late German Emperor, and all kings are shining examples of all the virtues—in the countries over which they are graciously pleased to rule. In fact as the moral virtues are dependent upon the Bible, so is social stability dependent upon the king—in the country to which they belong. The press and preachers of each country are evidence of this.

But to those who are inclined to glance at a few facts, we commend a summary of a paper read by Professor Hightower, at the International Congress of Psychology at Yale University, published in the *New York Times* for September 7. Professor Hightower conducted a number of examinations of boys and girls, using their knowledge of the Bible and their general conduct as tests. Precautions were taken to make the tests reliable, and 110 was taken as the top indicator mark in Biblical knowledge. Tests which gave opportunities for cheating, lying, loyalty, altruism, and service were given to 3,316 pupils. The results showed that many who were rated highest for biblical knowledge came lowest for the moral tests and vice-versa. The tests showed, says the Professor, that "mere knowledge of the Bible itself is not sufficient to ensure proper character attitudes." The results obtained by Professor Hightower can be verified by any parson's experience, but we do not expect a very great difference will be made in the cant about what would happen to character if the Bible were kept out of schools.

Aprpos of the above, we may note a report in the *Manchester Evening News* of September 20, which reports the execution of a rum-runner, hanged for killing two coastguardsmen. The man walked to the scaffold with a prayer on his lips, and passed his last hours reading the Bible. We have no doubt he prayed for everybody round him, and as he would be first in heaven, probably promised to see what he could do to secure them a place.

The correspondence columns of the *Daily Express* reveal, in regard to marriage and divorce, what ignorant, stupid, and harmful views there are current for which the Christian religion and the Christian Churches are responsible. These views have been sent to the *Express* as a result of articles by Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish theologians. Apparently, the editor of that paper is unaware that there are non-religious writers capable of producing an article on marriage and divorce, which would interest his readers, and which ought to be put before them, if his readers are to "hear all sides" and form intelligent opinions. Perhaps, however, it would be nearer the truth to infer that the editor stupidly imagines that only writers who believe in some kind of religion have anything to say worth hearing on such subjects.

In the *Teachers' World* for September 25, there appeared an appreciative article, by Kenneth Bell, on Francis Place and his achievements. Needless to say, there is no mention of Place's Freethought ideas or work! No doubt the Christian editor of the above-mentioned journal can explain how teachers can properly appreciate Place's life and work, when half the facts about him are suppressed. Possibly, in view of the fact that all teachers are more or less compelled to teach Christian religion in the State schools, the editor desired not to arouse their interest and speech.

Mr. Alexander Esslemont, President of the Aberdeen Sunday School Union, says that through the courtesy of the Local Education Authority "the Union was enabled

to discover the names and addresses of scholars of Sunday School age who were not attending any Sunday School. These have been visited with encouraging results." In our opinion, this Education Authority had no right to allow the Sunday School Union to have access to those names and addresses. What the Union wanted them for was to canvass for clients for the Churches. Any commercial firm that asked for the addresses with the object of gaining clients would have been politely refused. But if the Authority extends a favour to one business interest, it cannot logically refuse it to others. The Authority need reminding that the children's addresses being its private concern, should not have, in any circumstances, been divulged to any persons or association anxious to tout for customers. Neither the children or their parents should be exposed to the importunities of touts—pious or otherwise.

A Christian paper, writing about "Temperance," says: "There is too much reason for believing that while the Churches have rightly ceased to exact it as part of a code they are neglecting to emphasize its vital place in Christian character." The "it" of this sentence refers to total abstinence from alcoholic liquor; for that is what our friend means by "temperance." But total abstinence is not enjoined by any person in the Bible, Christ included. How then can it have a "vital place in Christian character"?

Says the Rev. H. W. R. Elsey, a man without a sense of humour is like a ship without a compass. Well, the best thing such a man could do would be to steer himself into a church. One would be certain that the funny antics of priest and congregation would never move him to unseemly mirth, as they would the man *with* a sense of humour.

Peace, now that there are enough locked-up human devices to destroy the world, is necessary, on the assumption that the human race must survive. It is comforting to know that the present Pope has made the subject of international peace especially his own. It will be well to remind the thoughtful, however, that, during the Great War, the political calculation of the Holy See was that Germany would win, and also, an extract from the *Times Literary Supplement* will not be out of place: "Modernists understand no better than Newman the springs of Roman ecclesiastical policy, which is never fanatical or idealistic, but always based on cool political calculation." In other words, the religious fervour of the remote Irish Peasant has as much connexion with the policy of Roman Catholicism as the man in the moon—or Mr. Chesterton.

It is announced that Miss Varney Hancock Cashmore, a barmaid, has preached at a Unitarian Church, Banbury. We should be glad to see the habit catching, for it is a lesser superstition than preaching which is only done by priests. The idea is all wrong—preaching is as easy as falling out of bed.

It must be gently but politely pointed out to the members of professional religion, that they are incapable of noticing that they have been affected by the growth of secular thought. No doubt they may joke for the love of God, or, in some cases lie for his greater glory, but the intelligent world is entitled quietly to whisper hurrah! on reading the following admission from a member of a Church, that in one period of its career, could make it jolly uncomfortable for a non-church-goer:—

I have heard it said that in the olden days horns were blown to draw the people to the churches. We may yet see some of the vicars in thi diocese playing a harp on Maidenhead Bridge on a Sunday evening in an effort to attract people to church.—The Rural Dean of Maidenhead (the Rev. C. E. M. Fry) at a meeting of the Industrial Christian Fellowship.

There is an item of news that all Churches plain and fancy can put in their pipe and smoke it. In the *Blue Book* issued by the Home Secretary, it is stated that there were 9,524 fewer convictions for drunkenness last

year than in 1927. As there is a falling away of attendance at churches and chapels we will pass this on to their best metaphysicians for an explanation.

The Bishop of Wakefield, Dr. J. Seaton, says he does not know what the intentions of the present Government are with regard to education, but he hopes that the rights of priests will be respected. That is frank, but its frankness does not remove its impertinence. What are the rights of priests? All that the Bishop can mean is that he hopes the Government will respect the right of priests to use the schools as a breeding ground for clients. Well, it may. Politicians are equal to anything, but we hope the Government will keep the priest in his place, and wherever that is, it should not be in the school.

"Illiteracy," says a Swedish writer in the *New York Nation*, "is unknown in Sweden." He then adds, "Ministers of religion have no prestige, and the churches are, as a rule, empty on Sundays. Fundamentalist teachings find only a very poor support in the country because of a general lack of interest in such things among the population." Evidently the revival in religion is following the same lines in Sweden as elsewhere.

Rev. Desmond Morse-Boycott says that he has never been able to "hold" any boy or girl who was not confirmed before the age of ten. In other words, the only way to keep people Christian is to get them very young, dope them thoroughly, and then take care they get hold of nothing that will naturalize the effects of the doping. A great many persons lately seem to be letting out the truth—obliquely, it is true, but still, letting it out. It almost looks like an epidemic.

The flag of the new Vatican city-state is to be white and yellow, with the crossed keys of St. Peter surmounted by a triple crown. Could there not be found room for a picture of Truth standing on her head and wagging her legs in the air?

Lieut.-Col. J. M. Mitchell declares that there are at least 200 municipal libraries which as cultural assets are practically negligible. Possibly, we suggest, there may be too many piously ignorant censors on the library committees.

The Rev. Percy Dearmer, D.D., has published a book called *The Legend of Hell*. Note the word "legend." Evidently Freethought propaganda has not been without effect in the world of religion. God's truth about Hell has become the *legend* of Hell. The impact of Freethought does help the Christian to progress a little. He ought to be humbly grateful enough to admit it, and to render courteous acknowledgment to those who have brought light into his understanding.

Mr. G. A. Cooke, Regius Professor of Hebrew, Oxford, says:—

Many of the episodes mentioned in the Old Testament should be told to children frankly as stories, their beautiful symbolism being pointed out, and their spiritual meaning explained. Children should never be taught anything they have to unlearn.

It is really rotten bad luck for the Churches that the children, when they come to adulthood, should unlearn this "beautiful symbolism" and "spiritual meaning." Still, that cannot be helped. After all, intelligence and common-sense persist in blossoming forth in quite a number of children, despite the efforts of pious seniors to retard it, for the glory of God.

Apart from the fact that America is "over-run with Messiahs," there is another serious item to be reckoned with. The disciples in Detroit of Mrs. Aimee Semple McPherson have been shocked by the discovery that she spent more than £8 on beauty treatment during a 15-days revival. Her visit cost nearly £4,000, and she left her followers with a deficit of £1,830 to meet. It is said that fools and their money are soon parted, and revivalists are pretty shrewd judges of the certainty of an unending supply of credulous human beings.

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TO CORRESPONDENTS.

FREETHINKER ENDOWMENT TRUST.—V. H. Smith, 5s.; A. H. Deacon, 5s.

R. F. TURNEY.—Thanks for your good opinion. There is no harm done in listening to another opinion, even when the opinion is not a sound one. A true opinion should be heard at least once, an unsound one as often as it can be expressed.

MRS. LUCAS.—Thanks for booklets. They are very good in both matter and form. More later. Would not mind a holiday in Corsica ourself.

R. B. KERR.—The question of whether it was proposed or suggested that Mr. Bernard Shaw should be elected President of the N.S.S. is one of fact, and not of probability, and it is useless discussing it on any other basis. And as Mr. Shaw was not a member of the N.S.S., every member must have known that he was not eligible for the Presidency. It is curious that Mr. Shaw never made the statement during the life of G. W. Foote. We have an article in hand from Mr. Shaw which will appear next week.

E. G. WHEELER (Sydney).—Thanks for cutting. We wish some of our people here would kick more energetically against the State subsidization of religion by remission of rates.

H. BARTON.—No one can dislike Roman Catholicism more than we do, and our contempt for the religion of the Roman Church is part of our whole-hearted contempt for Christianity as a whole. But we distinguish between an intellectual dislike of the Roman Church, and a hatred of it that is motivated by an inherited and equally fanatical Protestantism, which sees in every nunnery a brothel, and in every priest a scoundrel and a sensualist. That is about as reasonable as would be an Atheist who said that every man who called himself a Christian must belong to one, or both, of the same classes.

S. HOLME.—The question of reprinting the debate between the Editor and Mr. Shaw Desmond has not been decided. You can only make certain of getting a seat near the platform by applying for your ticket in good time. We note your other comments. We really should like a strong criticism of our *Materialism Re-stated*, but by someone who understood what the book was about, and who knew something more about science that comprised in a catalogue of distances and weights. What a tremendous difference there is in knowledge and understanding.

F. POPE.—Thanks for copy of the magazine *The Human*. It lives up to its description of itself as a "magazine for the uncivilized aristocracy, human and impersonal." For the benefit of those who would like to sample the journal we may add that it is published bi-monthly at 35 Norfolk Square, London, at 2s.

C. S. HARTE.—Sorry, but we do not think that letters criticizing Mr. Freeman will help. We have had many such, and greatly value the appreciation shown therein of our book on Materialism. If it has, to you, "thrown much light on a dark subject," that is enough.

S. METAYMA AND M. BARNARD.—Thanks for appreciation, but we think it best to let the matter rest where it is. It is good not to take some things too seriously.

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

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Orders for literature should be sent to the Business Manager of the Pioneer Press, 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4, and not to the Editor.

All Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to "The Pioneer Press," and crossed "Midland Bank, Ltd., Clerkenwell Branch."

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.

Apropos of our recent comments on Mr. G. Bernard Shaw's amazing statement in the *Daily Express* that after the death of Bradlaugh, the Society invited him to lecture at the Hall of Science with a view to his election as President, and our comments thereon, we have received a lengthy letter from Mr. Shaw giving his explanation of the event. We regret that temporary disarrangements in our composing room prevents our printing the letter in the present issue, but it will appear next week with Mr. Cohen's comments.

We have also received a letter from Professor Eddington, saying that he desires to reply to our recent criticism of his *Nature of the Physical World*, and asking whether such a reply would be inserted, if sent. We do not blame Professor Eddington for making the inquiry, which in some circumstances we might have regarded as anything but complimentary. But he has been brought up in a country soaked in Christian influences where genuine fair play in matters of opinion is not usual, and where the press does what it can to stifle any opinion that is not sufficiently organized to influence its advertising revenue if offended. Of course, we replied that in the whole of its history any one criticized in its pages has the right of reply, and such a right has never been questioned or denied. Professor Eddington is a very eminent man, and we shall be more interested than anyone in seeing what he has to say to our criticism.

Mr. R. H. Rosetti will to-day (October 6), lecture in the Secular Sunday School, Failsworth, in the afternoon at 2.45, on "England, 1929," and in the evening, at 6.30, on "An Evening with the Golden Bough." Manchester friends will please note. We trust that the hall will be packed out.

There appears to have been an error in this column when announcing the debate between Mr. J. Clayton and the Rev. W. Priestly. The date for the debate is to take place on October 13. Such mistakes as these would be avoided if those sending in their notices on a separate slip, containing just the information they wish printed, and nothing else. When in the midst of a busy day we have to dig the notice out from the midst of other matter, mistakes are very likely to happen.

Charles Southwell Once More.

A REPLY TO MR. H. B. DODDS.

"FOR what it is worth" I will reply, if I may, to Mr. Dodds' strictures upon my defence of Southwell. I will be as brief as possible.

As I have already tried to explain, instability is frequently, and even usually, a concomitant of originality and of genius. There are psychological reasons for this; but clearly the matter cannot, in its broad issues, be discussed at the moment. Southwell was unstable. It is not denied. But that fact does not detract an atom from the value of his incalculable services to Freethought. He was also quarrelsome; and, as I have pointed out elsewhere, without contradiction (and rightly so, for the facts are incontrovertible), so were nearly all the popular leaders of Freethought. There are psychological reasons, also, for this; but, again, this must be discussed later, with the editorial sanction. I am concerned here with Charles Southwell.

"He was foolish enough to make his article on 'The Jew Book' unnecessarily offensive," was he? Very well; on this point he shall defend himself. The ensuing quotation is from his own *Confessions* :—

That article was certainly a provoking one. My object in writing it was to provoke; and, with that view, [I] used terms the most offensive I was able to use. After it was composed I read it to my partners, with the distinct understanding that they were, if possible, to help me to improve it by substituting stronger, or more offensive, language than that used. Few know that that article was written for the noble purpose of testing a great principle and exposing a great delusion. The Bristol Agitation I look back to with pride, because it was carried on for a holy purpose; and, so far as myself and Mr. Chilton were concerned, with unflinching courage. Had my other partner been as plucky and judicious as Chilton, the Bristol agitation would have palsied the heart of bigotry, and achieved results second to none in importance for the friends of truth and enemies of sacerdotal humbugs.

So. Once again, in my judgment, Southwell proves himself a far-sighted hero; and I do not envy the quality of the "Freethought" that would not agree with me. If Mr. Dodds calls Southwell's statement "folly," then all that I can rejoin is, that I prefer Southwell's foolishness to Mr. Dodds' wisdom.

Here is a parallel quotation from G. W. Foote; it is from the *Freethinker* of December 6, 1903 :—

Some people may fancy that I carried on a mere wild-cat attack on Christianity in former days. They are mistaken. I fought with a deliberate method . . . Moreover, we fought fiercely, some say bitterly, because we were profoundly disgusted at the treatment of Charles Bradlaugh when he attempted to take his seat in the House of Commons . . . I soon found myself in prison . . .

Ah! Here is more "foolishness," no doubt. If Southwell was a fool, so was Foote. But the accusation of folly comes with a rather ill grace, I venture to opine, from those who actually benefit because the heroes of the past voluntarily and deliberately sacrificed their liberty for the benefit of their fellow-men. I may be a hero-worshipper; but hero-worship seems to me preferable to luke-warmth.

Southwell edited a Methodist paper, but he never pretended to be a Methodist. The situation, no doubt whatever, appealed to his sense of fun, which he possessed in abundance. It would appeal to my own sense of fun if I were offered the editorship of the *War-Cry* or the *Methodist Recorder*. And I should not cease to be an Atheist if I accepted the post. Besides, Southwell redeemed everything by

laughing at his employers on his death-bed, when they came to see him about his soul. How was Southwell to get a living in New Zealand? How was he treated financially by his fellow-Freethinkers? Once again he shall speak for himself, from his own *Confessions* :—

Accepting that maxim which says—"The labourer is worthy of his hire," I see nothing disgraceful or unworthy of genuine patriotism in demanding hire for my labour. Having worked long, far too long, for the benefits of others, I shall, in future, take some little care of myself. On leaving Bristol gaol, after a close imprisonment of more than thirteen months, I found myself in possession of just five shillings, which sum, not being sufficient to defray traveling and other expenses incidental to the proposed journey to London, "my native home," I was obliged to borrow five pounds from a relative, who was not at all anxious to lend. Richard Carlile was supported by money as well as talk. I was supported by talk, and nothing but talk. Agitation never brought grist to my mill; . . . my reward has been "apostolic blows and knocks." These things I mention for a public purpose. I neither whine nor complain about them. The friends of Freethinking are at liberty to act as they think fit towards the advocates of Freethinking; but let them not imagine that I feel called upon to make any more sacrifices for a party who never yet sacrificed one iota for me. Since Richard Carlile no man has done so much—no man sacrificed so much [for] the cause of Freethinking—as myself. Rightly or wrongly. I believe this rightly or wrongly. I publish it—and rightly or wrongly I assure Freethinkers, that justice never will be done to their principles until something like justice is done to those persons who efficiently advocate them.

Mr. Dodds takes one only of my several points in Southwell's favour, and, ignoring all the rest, dismisses it—without a jest.

Any reader of Mr. Robertson's *History* who can say that his reference to Southwell form "a just and generous meed of recognition" would, without a blush, write down Louis Quatorze a celibate, and Jack Falstaff an ascetic. In plain speech, if words retain their accepted meanings, Mr. Dodds' statement is nonsense. "Only that and nothing more."

When Mr. Dodds mentions any fact relating to Southwell (other than the facts I have "dug up" out of the past) he is demonstrably wrong.

Southwell started the *Oracle of Reason* with a circulation not "of a few hundred," but of a few thousands. This fact may be found in the preface to Volume II of the *Oracle* itself. The circulation dropped badly when the paper's founder went to prison; but a circulation of four thousand for an Atheistic paper in the year of grace 1841 is in itself an adequate reply to Mr. Dodds' attempted belittling of this heroic editor Southwell. My critic is, it seems to me, himself all at sea when he refers to the *Oracle* "a mere drop in the ocean of national thought." Viewed in the light of the past eighty-odd years, the *Oracle* signified the birth of a principle that will one day, in the not so very distant future, dominate human thought. The *Oracle* made the *Freethinker* possible; they are both in the Royal Line of mental emancipation. If the *Oracle* was indeed "a mere drop," it was a very large drop. All drops are not of the same dimensions. Besides, save to the Philistines and advertisers, it is not mere circulation that counts. *Comic Cuts* has no doubt a wider circulation than the *Realist*, but it is scarcely, for that reason, of greater human import.

And "doing time for Freethought" does mean "giving it a lift." If it be true that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church, it is specially the case with Freethought. What about Carlile, Holyoake, and Foote? What names are to be com-

pared with these in the popularization of Freethought? (And Bradlaugh only escaped prison on account of a legal technicality.) Also, be it remembered, if Freethought is not a popular and democratic movement, it is nothing. The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church, all the time; if only because the history of human emancipation is written in blood, and punctuated by suffering.

Mr. Dodds finds my *obiter dicta* interesting and amusing. It is neither uninteresting nor unamusing that my critic himself, while decrying hero-worship (he thinks it "unfortunate"), evidently regards Mr. Robertson and his *History* as sacrosanct. What is this new brand of bibliolatry? How long has Mr. Robertson been a "sacred" figure?

I may be very dull, but I cannot see why Mr. Robertson's excellent book should be immune from criticism; and I may be (I am!) a hero-worshipper. I have, and have expressed more than once, extreme admiration for Mr. Robertson and his *History*, which is really a monumental achievement, fitly crowning a noble literary career; but I am a Freethinker, and when I find Mr. Robertson's treatment of a fellow-Freethinker in my judgment inadequate and unjust, surely I have a right to say so? I have as much right to criticize Mr. Robertson's published writings as Mr. Dodds has to criticize my own. Nor have I any wish to "whack at" (Mr. Dodds' phrase; not mine) Mr. Robertson, who is happily with us; but I do wish to defend Southwell, who is no longer alive to defend himself, and whose career is, all-too-obviously, almost utterly unknown to the present generation of Freethinkers.

If this "amuses" Mr. Dodds, all I can say in reply is to quote the worn tag, there is no accounting for tastes.

As regards that question of Respectability, Mr. Dodds can be answered in a very few words.

A *History of Freethought—Freethought*, mark you!—that contains portraits of Charles Lamb and Charles Christian Hennell, and does *not* contain portraits of Richard Carlile and George William Foote, is "heavily over-weighted on the side of Respectability." And I venture further to assert that no serious critic of Nineteenth-Century Freethought can deny my statement, if he be both well-informed and honest.

Never would I dream of charging Mr. Robertson with hypocrisy. His whole literary life refutes the accusation, which is not my own, but attributed wrongly to me by Mr. Dodds.

It is "in the interests of truth and of justice and of honour" that I have tried to defend the dead hero, Charles Southwell; if my critic will bring forward fresh facts concerning Southwell to refute my vindication, we will, if he be willing, discuss further. But so far he gives no evidence of knowledge about this pioneer beyond what he has found in Mr. Robertson's inadequate references.

Originally intended as a mere letter, this reply has swelled into an article. The importance of my subject must serve as my excuse. May my editor and my readers forgive me!

VICTOR B. NEUBURG.

The hunger of men for truth is immense; but they are not erect on their feet; the senses are too strong for the soul. Our senses barbarize us. When the ideal world recedes before the senses we are on a retrograde march.—Emerson.

We have been born out of the eternal silence; and now we live—live for ourselves—and not as the pall-bearers of a funeral, but as the upholders and creators of our age.—Emerson.

Dolet.

(Continued from page 603.)

His studies at Paris began at the age of twelve. There he learned Latin, and contracted that deep admiration of Cicero which he always retained. He studied rhetoric under Nicholas Berauld, "one of the greatest masters of eloquence and of Latin scholarship of the time," a man who was much greater than his books, and who had the signal honour of being tutor to the three great Colignys. Berauld was suspected of sympathy with the reformers and it is probable that his toleration and breadth exercised a beneficial influence over the mind of Dolet.

At the age of seventeen Dolet went to Padua, to pursue his studies still further at the renowned seat of learning. The intellectual atmosphere of this place profoundly affected him. "At Padua," says Mr. Christie, "an independence and freedom of thought existed which would have been sought in vain elsewhere." At Padua, wrote Paleario, in 1530, "dwell poets, orators, celebrated philosophers. Learning has taken refuge there from choice, and has there found an asylum where Pallas teaches all the arts: in short, there is no place where we can better gratify a taste for reading and learning." One of its chief figures at that time, Cardinal Bembo, was a thorough Pagan, who refused to read the Epistles of St. Paul, lest they should vitiate his Greek style! Padua was a centre of Freethought.

"The University of Padua was at this time, and during the whole of the century, the headquarters of a philosophical school altogether opposed to the doctrines of Christianity, but which was divided into two sects, one pantheistic, and the other if not absolutely materialist, at least nearly approaching to it. Both professed adherence to the doctrines of Aristotle, and in terms acknowledged him as their only master and teacher. But as in the Christian Church, we have read of some who followed Paul and others Cephas, so among the Aristotelians of Padua there were some who followed the commentaries of Averroes, and others those of Alexander of Aphrodisias. Both disbelieved the immortality of the individual soul, the former on the ground of its absorption. The other sect was in fact, if not in terms, materialist, and absolutely denied the immortality of the soul; nor could its doctrine, so at least its opponents asserted, be distinguished from pure Atheism. Of this latter school, Pietro Pomponazzo, better known under the Latin form of Pomponatius, the most distinguished philosopher of the day, was the acknowledged representative. Born in 1462, he studied both medicine and philosophy at Padua, where, being still young, he was appointed one of the professors of philosophy, and distinguished himself by maintaining the pure doctrine of Aristotle (that is, as he interpreted it, materialism) against his older colleague, Achillini, who followed the doctrine and teaching of Averroes. It was in 1516 that he published his treatise, *De Immortalitate Animæ*, in which he maintains that the doctrine of immortality is not to be found in Aristotle, is altogether opposed to reason, and is based only on the authority of revelation and of the Church, to both of which, when his work was attacked, he professed unbounded reverence. His book was replied to by his pupil, Contarini, and was attacked by the Inquisition and publicly burnt at Venice. But it met with a defender in Bembo, the constant friend and protector of freedom of thought, and by his influence the book was permitted to be printed with some corrections, and a statement by Pomponatius that he submitted wholly to revelation and the Church, and did not in any manner oppose the doctrine of immortality, but only the philosophical arguments

which were generally used in its support. This, however, as Hallam remarks, 'is the current language of philosophy in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries which must be judged by other presumptions.' Pomponatius died in 1525. His celebrity and influence long continued, and were at their height when Etienne Dolet arrived at Padua, where for three years he sat at the feet of the disciples of Pomponatius, drinking in without doubt those materialistic doctrines which, if they did not entirely harmonize with the doctrines of his master Cicero, were at least contrary to Medievalism and superstition, and therefore congenial to his mind."

We are thankful that Dolet pursued his studies amid such surroundings, but we also reflect with a sigh that his after-sufferings were only its natural result. At Padua there was ample toleration for its scholars, and thinkers were numerous enough to ensure their safety; but when the heretical ideas born and nourished there were carried to less favoured cities, they brought upon the possessor the bitterest persecution and often a cruel death.

But "literature and not philosophy was Dolet's mistress." After learning from the latter how erroneous was the orthodoxy of his day, he turned lovingly to the former, which he again wooed under the guidance of Simon Villanovus, whose learning, industry, and genius, were praised by the best judges of the time, including Rabelais himself. This distinguished man died at the early age of thirty-five, and was deeply mourned by Dolet, his most attached pupil. An epitaph composed by the affectionate young scholar on his master is worth citing as a mental index. The original is in Latin, but Mr. Christie gives us an English rendering:—

"I bid you welcome reader, and ask your attention for a moment. That fate, which mortals consider to be a misfortune, namely to die early, I think a most happy lot. Wherefore congratulate me on my death and do not lament me, for by death I cease to be mortal. Farewell and pray for my repose."

M. Boulmier remarks that "one feels in these few lines, mournful and icy as the bronze they cover, that incurable dissatisfaction with the world, that bitter contempt of life, that cold and sombre aspiration towards the repose of death, which forms a distinctive trait in the character of the unhappy Dolet." Mr. Christie, however, demurs to this, and says that to him Dolet appears to have been of a joyous temperament, and fond of life, for the sake of cultivating his own mind, and also for the sake of producing works that might procure him the fame for which he so eagerly longed.

An elegiac poem, in Latin, on Villanovus gives us a further insight into the state of Dolet's mind at this time. We again take Mr. Christie's English version:—

"O thou whom probity and sincerity made my friend,
Thou who wast joined to me in an indissoluble union,
Thou whom kind fortune gave to me for a comrade,
Thou, my companion, now taken from me by cruel death;
Art thou wrapped in eternal sleep and in profound darkness,
So that in vain I mournfully address thee in my song?
Yet what love compels me to do I shall sing, though thou
may'st be deaf to it.

I am not ashamed to be accused of too tender an affection.
Farewell dear friend, the one whom I have loved more than
my own eyes,

And whom love compels me to love for ever more and more.
May thy nights be tranquil and thy sleep quiet,
For ever silent, but for ever well.

And if in the land of shadows there is any perception,
Do not reject my prayers, but love one to whom thou wilt
always be dear."

This poem, which Mr. Christie describes as one of Dolet's best, both as to language and sentiment, reveals his intense scepticism. His heart yearns after his dead friend, but his intellect cannot trace his presence beyond the tomb. The hinted possibility of

a continued life is little more than a poetic artifice, and at the utmost it does not exceed the *grand peut-être* of Rabelais—a great Perhaps!

Dolet's intention on leaving Padua was to return to France, but he was persuaded to accompany Jean de Langeac, Bishop of Limoges, who was then on his way to Venice as Ambassador from France. At the early age of twenty-one Dolet became his secretary. Jean de Langeac had been Ambassador to Poland, Portugal, Hungary, Switzerland, Scotland, England, and Rome, and few men of his time had seen more of the world; he was also a patron of men of letters, and himself a man of learning and culture; and his selection of Dolet as his secretary speaks highly for the young Frenchman's character and attainments.

As the duties of his office were not heavy, Dolet found ample leisure for study. He attended the lectures of Egnazio, and continued the preparation of materials for his great work, *The Commentaries on the Latin Tongue*. He also found time in this "fairy city of the heart," as Byron calls it, to fall in love. But his mistress was soon taken by death, as his dearest friend had been before. His epitaph on the fair Elma is described as "stilted and pretentious," and we may conclude that his heart was not severely wounded. At his age, and in that magical city, he was bound to fall in love with some fair one, and his passion was probably no more than a flush of youthful spirits.

Dolet's stay in Paris was but brief. Early in 1532, at the instance of De Langeac, who charged himself with his *protegé's* maintenance while his studies were being completed, he entered as a law student the University of Toulouse. Under the Romans, and still more under the Visigoths, Toulouse had been the most polished city of Gaul; but at this time it was given over to orthodoxy and ignorance. It had been, centuries earlier, the headquarters of the simple Albigenses, who had for their many virtues and lack of faith, been exterminated by what Mr. Christie well describes as "one of the most horrible and brutal persecutions which the history of the world records," before which, "the persecutions of the Christians by the Pagan emperors of Rome fades into insignificance." Thousands of men, women and children were slain by sword and fire, and a still greater number were tortured, wounded, imprisoned, and robbed. The most smiling and prosperous part of France was changed into a desert. But heresy was crushed, and the most heretical became the most orthodox city in France. At Toulouse, St. Dominic founded his celebrated order, and there shortly after his death the Inquisition was established. Not only the governors of Languedoc, but even the Kings of France themselves could not enter Toulouse until they had taken an oath before the Inquisition to maintain the faith and the Holy Office. In the Place de Salins, more eminent heretics were "roasted for the love of God" than in any other city except Paris. Toulouse, even in 1562, anticipated the St. Bartholomew massacre by a wholesale slaughter of the Huguenots within its walls; and "an annual fête in memory of the happy event was instituted in the city, and subsequently confirmed by a Bull of Pope Pious IV., who granted special indulgences to those who took part in it." After the St. Bartholomew massacre at Paris, three hundred Huguenots were led out of prison one by one and butchered by eight students of the University, and the receipt for their payment are said to be still in existence. In the year 1611, Pierre Girardie, the Inquisitor-General, tried and condemned to death a boy of nine years of age, and the poor child was duly burned alive. Centuries have elapsed since, but one's flesh creeps in recording the infamy.

G. W. FOOTE.

Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

ECCLESIASTICAL, "CONFIDENCE MEN."

SIR,—Since most religions are operated on a cash basis as quasi-business concerns, professing to guarantee *bona-fide* insurance against alleged unpleasant states of consciousness after death, for a consideration collected regularly in legal tender; and since enormous sums of money are annually collected from the public on the strength of such obviously false pretences, is it not high time that the Secular state, as a public duty, instituted a thorough inquiry into the alleged genuineness of such doubtful securities for which the vendor has collected cash?

Against the "Bucket shop," and the ordinary confidence man the State provides legal protection for all citizens alike; and the police authorities are sworn to prosecute in all cases. The proof for the false pretence being the inability to deliver.

What then is the precise degree of moral turpitude involved in collecting cash in exchange for chimerical securities which the vendor knows well he can't deliver as represented, whether the goods are subject to delivery, before or after death?

Can the Secular State of the near future continue to condone the gigantic swindle of the ecclesiastical bucket shop, while prosecuting the dishonest vendor of *mem-done* Securities for false pretences?

Surely, as the modern public grows more enlightened, this unwarranted legal discrimination would tend to bury the common law into grave disrespect.

Mimnermus, in "The Power of Words," pointed out how otherwise sane people can be parted from their money by the incantations of the "pathological" ecclesiastical jargon of so-called Christian Science. Is this kind of false pretences to be open to exploitation by other Mrs. Eddy's bent on forming a profitable chain of ecclesiastical bucket shops without the law intervening?

Only the *Freethinker* has the honesty to expose this palpable fraud, for which it is entitled to the thanks of the public.

HEWSON COWEN.

HOSPITALS AND RELIGION.

SIR,—It seems that one cannot get away from Religion even at Hospitals and Sanatoriums. My dear daughter, at St. Thomas's, was asked what religion she professed. Her mother told them she had none, but they could put her down as Ethical. They said they could not recognize that, so I suppose they entered her as Church of England, which is usually done when people have no particular faith. Then there is the Sunday services with prayers and hymn-singing, which everyone is expected to join in, including the nurses. Of course the patients should be allowed to have their own spiritual advisers if they wish it, but I think that the Sunday services could be dispensed with.

ANDREW CLARKE.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE.

SIR,—Your correspondent "Mimnermus," writing in your issue of September 15, is quite mistaken in saying that Mrs. Eddy tried "to build a bridge between religion and science." What Mrs. Eddy did was to rediscover the divine Principle which underlay the works of the prophets, Christ Jesus, his disciples, and the early Christians. Christian Science is the Science of divine metaphysics, which can only be understood through spiritual discernment. The teaching of Christian Science does not in any way remove the "evangel of Jesus Christ" from its churches, as our critic avers. On the contrary, it emphasizes his teaching and practice more than any other church in the world to-day. There are hundreds of thousands throughout the civilized world who are able to prove Mrs. Eddy's teachings to be true.

The Christian Science textbook, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, by Mary Baker Eddy, is not a new Bible, as our critic supposes. It is, as its name implies, a key to the Scriptures.

CHARLES W. J. TENNANT.

THE KREUTZER SONATA.

SIR,—Mr. Walter Mann has been writing in the *Freethinker* for a long time, his articles always full of interest and information, extensively quoting from the world of books, and between these betraying a fine style of his own; but even here there is a renaissance. The recent notes on Tolstoy have been of absorbing interest, especially to me. Belonging to Mr. Mann's period, perhaps in a more rustic setting, I remember being tremendously impressed by that same *Kreutzer Sonata*, and a little carried away till I encountered the robust logic of G. W. Foote, who showed me how Tolstoy had become a "pious moujik," and that "a beautiful woman was not a skeleton"—why are Christians, real Christians, not still lamenting in sackcloth and ashes? Because, I suppose, there are none left—logically construed, there is no pessimism to equal Christianity. But the great Russian is not condemned. The *Kreutzer Sonata* I only remember fragmentarily; but as a broken cloud at evening, each scattered particle illuminated by the lingering sunset of the past. *Resurrection* also enthralled me, perhaps with the writers' own imperious urge towards impossible perfection. This indeed the sacrificial, penitential essence of Christianity, that operating from the far past in the evolution of the moral code, makes religion of so long life. To pursue the thought would be to trespass on Mr. Mann's domain, of which he is the much more worthy custodian. Much later in life I came upon *Crime and Punishment* by that other Russian, also with a touch of Christianity, most moving of all, if motivated, in its most heart-rending passage, by utter humiliation, that last consolation of despair. But, no; "Elizabeth" was a noble type (wife of a Scot) who in desperation drove her daughter on to the streets and with her smaller children "acted" there with superhuman, yet unchristian courage! Unfathomable was this human love. Here, not hereafter, were the unsearchable riches, not of God, but of a poor mother's heart; riches so often trampled in the mire, while the purely imaginary and artificial religious love, or fear, is exalted to the skies. Speaking of Dostoevsky, a writer truly refers to "the vast and dreadful flickers of his imagination." Here was greatness. If the philosophy of those great Russians was not always sound, and the greatest are not superlative at this, they had genius that won intensely on the average breast, where the pale, perfect Christ left it cold as from the touch of a corpse.

Perhaps Mr. Mann will give us a study of Dostoevsky. If we differ, so much the better. So far I am with him—save when he fails to worship Thomas Paine! But that is different.

A.M.

THE ORIGIN OF WAR.

SIR,—In answer to "Curious," who asks for information about the Serajevo murder, 1914. As the representative in England of the Freethought section of Senacieca Asocio Tutmonda (Workers' Esperanto International) I have written to our Servian friends asking for the information. Later I hope to be able to forward the result to "Curious," and possibly for the benefit of other "Freethinker" readers in our journal. I shall at any time be pleased to help in linking up Freethinkers with others in foreign lands. At the moment I have the names of several young Germans who would like to correspond in English and/or German on Freethought subjects. Correspondents are reminded that on the Continent the Proletariat movement is the strongest Freethought section, and that the outlook there is both interesting, and at the moment of special interest now that the Roman Catholic Church is spreading its tentacles in England. I feel sure that it would be well for some of our friends to learn of Continental experiences and strengthen the ties of friendship with like-minded fighters over there. Letters sent care of the Editor will receive prompt attention.

L. CORRINNA.

Everywhere progress originates from individuals, not from the many or the masses, for the simple reason that in every case somebody was the first.

Count Hermann Keyserling.

How To Help.

"CANNOT something be done in this place," is a question often directed to Headquarters by well meaning Freethinkers in different parts of the country.

One gets an impression of a Dozy Executive, stirred, only by periodic thumps. But the impression is a false one.

There are certainly many very backward areas, indeed far more than there should be, but the fault is not this end.

Providing a suitable hall is available, and half a dozen local Freethinkers are willing to put in a little work, Freethought lectures can be arranged.

Obviously a small committee can best deal with the necessary local preliminaries and subsequent arrangements.

In future, then, instead of "Cannot something be done in this place," let us have, "I am prepared to co-operate with other local Freethinkers in organizing some Freethought activity in this place."

If, where possible, an offer to do local secretarial work, or provide a meeting place for a local committee, accompanied the offer to co-operate, it would help things considerably.

Such offers can then be dealt with at this end, and as soon as a sufficient number to form a small committee in any locality are received, we can bring them together, and develop the local possibilities with assistance from Headquarters.

R. H. ROSETTI,
Secretary, N.S.S.

National Secular Society.

REPORT OF EXECUTIVE MEETING HELD SEPTEMBER 27, 1929.
MR. CHAPMAN COHEN in the chair.

Also present: Messrs. Quinton, Gorniot, Moss, Clifton, Silvester, Corrigan, Easterbrook, Mrs. Quinton, junr., Mrs. Venton, Miss Kough, and the Secretary.

A number of apologies for absence through holidays were read.

Minutes of the previous meeting were read and accepted.

New members were elected for South London, West London, West Ham, Swansea, and the Parent Society.

Arrangements were sanctioned for carrying on outdoor propaganda into October.

Items of minor importance were dealt with and the meeting closed.

R. H. ROSETTI,
Secretary.

Society News.

EIGHT meetings were addressed by Mr. G. Whitehead in the Newcastle area. Weather conditions interfered somewhat with the Stanley meeting, and an unsuitable pitch prevented the meeting in Gateshead from being a satisfactory one. But the meetings in Newcastle were the most successful in point of numbers and general appreciation. Mr. Whitehead has so far addressed in this town. The one on the Sunday evening on the Town Moor was exceptionally good, and the whole series was remarkably free from the acrimonious questions often in evidence at our meetings. Except for a minor encounter with a young policeman, no attempt was made by the police to repeat the tactics of last year, when our speaker was summoned for alleged obstruction, and ordered to cease selling the literature. The only excitement was provided at the closing meeting by a notorious character, whose support of Freethought took the form of trying to cause a disturbance, and later holding an opposition meeting in denunciation of the N.S.S. in general and Mr. Whitehead in particular.

We have to thank Mr. Macara and other Newcastle members for assistance, and especially the Secretary, Mr. J. G. Bartram, who after nearly forty years of propaganda is still the most active Freethinker on the Tyne-side.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

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

LONDON.

INDOOR.

THE NON-POLITICAL METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (The Orange Tree, Fuston Road, N.W.1): October 10, at 101 Tottenham Court Road, Social and Dance, 7.30 to 11.30. Admission is.

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Oliver Goldsmith School, Peckham Road, S.E.): 7.0, Prof. Gilbert Murray, M.A.—"The Crisis in Ethics."

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1): S. K. Ratcliffe—"Bernard Shaw for God and King."

OUTDOOR.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 12.30, Mr. James Hart; 3.30, Messrs. F. 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 Shorrdole Road): Saturday, 8.0 p.m.; Effie Road, opposite Walham Green Station, Sunday, 8.0 p.m.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Brockwell Park): Mr. George Whitehead will begin a week's lecturing in South London district.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Clapham Common): 11.30, Mr. George Whitehead—A Lecture, Friday, Liverpool Street, Camberwell Gate, 8.0, Mr. L. Ebury.

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

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 sympathisers. 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.

FAIRSWORTH SECULAR SCHOOL (Pole Lane): Mr. R. H. Rosetti will lecture in the afternoon at 2.45—"England, 1929." Evening at 6.30—"An Evening with the Golden Bough."

OUTDOOR.

LIVERPOOL (Merseyside) BRANCH N.S.S. (Beaumont Street): Monday, October 7, at 7.30, Mr. J. V. Shortt—A Lecture. Tuesday, Edge Hill Lamp, at 8.0, Mr. P. Sherwin—A Lecture. During the week commencing October 21, Mr. G. Whitehead will be lecturing each evening. Details of times and places will be announced later.

Miscellaneous Advertisements.

FREETHINKERS—Croydon and District—Those interested in forming a Social Circle in this area please apply to W. Thompson, 68, Grange Road, Purley Oaks.

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