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PRINCIPAL CONTENTS.

	Page
<i>Witch Doctors at Home and Abroad.—The Editor</i>	737
<i>Jazzy Jesuitry.—Mimmermus</i>	738
<i>Attenuated Religion.—W. Mann</i>	740
<i>Luther was not a Puritan.—(Reverend) Ray H. Abrams</i>	741
<i>Sexual Superstitions in Savage Society.—T. F. Palmer</i>	746
<i>Was Jesus Christ a Buddhist?—Alex S. Guthrie</i>	748
<i>Magellan, the Fanatic who Failed.—Nechells</i>	748
<i>Another Fiction Gone West</i>	749
<i>Eugenics.—H. Cutner</i>	749
<i>Acid Drops, To Correspondents, Sugar Plums, Letters to the Editor, etc.</i>	

Views and Opinions.

Witch Doctors at Home and Abroad.

THERE is, in South Africa, what the *Daily Express* calls "the queerest trade union ever formed." It is called the Witch Doctors' Association, but except for the unusual honesty of the name, I see no reason why any English newspaper should call it queer. For we have, in sober truth, similar associations in this country, formed by men who follow substantially the same profession, existing for substantially the same ends. There is the old-established witch doctors' Trade Union, with its headquarters at Rome, which positively forbids its members to work, religiously, with anyone who does not belong to it. This union claims that unless a practitioner belongs to it he has no authority, and should not be engaged by anyone who wishes to employ a witch doctor. Then we have rival trade unions in the shape of the Church of England witch doctors, with others formed by men whose methods differ somewhat from those laid down by the trade union rules of the older body. But all of them have the same ideas behind them, they all make substantially the same claims, and they all strive after the same ends.

The only distinction I can see between the African and the English organizations is that the African variety calls itself unashamedly "Witch Doctors." and is not ashamed of its profession. It does not artfully pretend to do what any other man of common sense is able to do; it says quite openly and boldly that it does certain things—foretelling the future, securing recovery from disease, getting a man right with God, because its members possess powers that other men do not possess. So did our own witch doctors once upon a time, but the times are no longer favourable to such a claim; so the aim is for the English associations to retain all the powers and privileges of full-blown witch doctors, without plainly appearing as such.

* * *

Witch Doctors at Work.

The *Daily Express* recently gave a report of a meet-

ing of the African Association of Witch Doctors' held at Johannesburg. From that report it is clear that they are not asking for protection against their English competitors. General Smuts lately pointed out that the English witch doctors, sent out by the English Missionary Societies were quite powerless to cope with them. It was no use these latter bringing their foreign book, with its examples of the way in which Jesus had cast out devils, because they had their own methods of dealing with the same thing and they were quite as effective, and custom tells in Africa as it does here. The only thing that would be of avail, said General Smuts, would be English science, not English religion. The Association, to do it justice, was prepared to put its cards on the table. The members of the Association dressed in European clothing brought their magical outfit with them, consisting mainly of the bones of pigs that had been properly sacrificed, and threw them about the table explaining how the thing was done. The President of the Association explained how they were able to "smell out" evil, foretell the future, and cure disease. They acted pretty much as the Christian Church had acted for centuries, very much of it was quite in line with the Holy Bible, and I am quite sure that if Jesus and his immediate followers had been present they would have witnessed the performance understandingly, sympathetically, and if the names used had been slightly different, approvingly. But a great deal depends upon where these things are done and who does them. A poor devil of a fortune teller operating with tea leaves, or cards, or a "magic crystal" gets a few months imprisonment, while a member of the English Association of Witch Doctors working under the name of the Church of Rome or the Church of England may do the same kind of thing with impunity. So the *Express* found the meeting presented "an incredible mixture of balderdash and superstition." The *Express* does not circulate among the supporters of the African Association of witch doctors.

* * *

Witch Doctors in America.

Curiously enough, on another page of the same issue of the *Express*, from which the account of the African meeting is taken, there is an account of another gathering which took place at Boston, U.S.A. In 1869 there was buried there a Father Patrick, a representative of the Roman Association of Witch-doctors. Someone—probably one of the other members of the Association—has discovered that the bones of Father Patrick possess many of the virtues the African Witch Doctors ascribe to the bones of their sacrificially killed pig; and on one day recently thousands of vehicles deposited numbers of sick people who came there to get cured. Of course, in this case it was the bones of a priest that was working the miracle, and in the other the bones of a pig, but the difference does appear to be important to an outsider,

although to a member of a trade union these technical distinctions are no doubt very significant. The police did their best to regulate the crowd, but it "broke through the police cordon, rushed to the grave, kissed the tombstone, which was erected some time ago by subscriptions of pence from hosts of children . . . Many in the crowd picked up lumps of earth from about the tomb, taking them away as relics. The police eventually removed the tombstone from the cemetery for repairs and locked the cemetery gates . . . Many women were trampled underfoot in the crush, while a number of children lost their parents."

One almost expected the *Express* to head the article "More Balderdash and Superstition"; and had it done so we have no doubt but that many of the Roman Catholic Witch Doctors' Association, including Mr. G. K. Chesterton and Mr. Hillaire Belloc, would have written protesting against the insult to the religious feelings of sincere Christians. So the American orgie of savagery is headed "Pathetic Scenes." It makes a deal of difference whether one lives in Johannesburg or Boston, U.S.A.

* * *

Religion True and False.

An outsider is apt to get confused over these trade union distinctions. It is true that there is no instance in the Bible of the bones of a pig being used to work a miracle, but to the primitive Jews the pig was evidently a sacred animal—enjoying almost the status of a God, and so able to work miracles. The taboo on the pig proves this to every anthropologist. In the Bible it is the bones of Elisha that brings the dead man to life, and, theologically, that makes a great deal of difference. It is true that the bones of St. Rosalia, of Palermo, which were ultimately discovered to be those of a goat, for centuries protected the people against epidemics, and the poor Africans might have thought that what the bones of a goat could do in Palermo, the bones of a pig might do in Africa. I must say that I incline to agree with the Africans, but then I speak as a layman and not as a theologian with whom the way in which one stands when one delivers a blessing, the kind of robes one wears when one prays, the kind of candles one burns during a Church service are things of tremendous importance. Nor ought we to believe, that is, if we are genuinely civilized, that anyone but the gospel Jesus can cure blindness by mixing spittle with dust and slapping it on a blind man's eye. There are bones of saints all over Europe, and clothes of Saints, and bits of the true cross, etc., all of which are able to do what the African witch doctors say can be done with the bones of a pig, but from the strictly trade union point of view, what is the use of a union if a body of African outsiders are permitted to do these things? In the interest of trade unionism the Government of South Africa should suppress this new association as speedily as possible.

* * *

Tweedledum and Tweedledee.

A little while back the newspapers gave us lengthy accounts of the pilgrimage of thousands of people to Lourdes to bathe in a miracle working spring in order to get rid of their disease. In another direction, connected with the English trade unions, there are quite a number of men who go about the country working miraculous cures—in the name of Jesus. A few weeks ago I gave some excerpts from a publication of the Roman Catholic Association of Witch Doctors recounting the way in which through the agency of the officials of the union one man had secured a rise of £150 on his salary, another had let a house that was hanging on his hands, another had obtained a

lucrative job in a lawyer's office, with many other wonderful occurrences. The Johannesburg meeting of the South African Witch Doctors' Association offered to produce evidence of the same kind of things worked, but with the bones of a pig, and a genuine Christian will see at once that while these things may be done by the bones of a saint, or a piece of the true cross, or by the agency of the Virgin, it is quite another thing to use the bones of a pig. The other things may command the respectful attention of any newspaper in Great Britain, they do at least bear evidence of the inextinguishable strength of the "religious instinct." But the bones of a pig! It is "halderdash and superstition." And when the claims are made by men who openly call themselves witch doctors, they become an affront to the religious sense of every man and woman. If things are to be thus plainly called by their proper names we may as well close all the churches and have done with it.

If these members of the African Witch Doctors' Association wish to continue their work, and to gain the respect of the English community, they have an obvious and proper course before them. Let them disband their African trade union and join the Roman one or the English one. They will then be able to preach substantially the same thing under a different terminology. The frame of mind that has done for the one will do equally well for the other. The bones of a saint will do quite as well as the bones of a sacrificed pig, and the mysteries of throwing the bones will be quite equalled by turning a drop of ordinary wine and a common-place biscuit into the body and blood of a man who was supposed to have died a couple of thousand years ago. Above all they must cease to call themselves witch doctors. That form of mental straightforwardness has now gone out of fashion in the religion of all civilized countries. They may call themselves "spiritual guides," or something equally vague, but they must beware of saying just what they are. Properly managed they will not find it at all difficult to preach the utmost amount of "halderdash and superstition" in Christian England. England would not be as Christian as it is were it otherwise.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

Jazzy Jesuitry.

"When found make a note of."—*Captain Cuttle.*

"This whining and hand-wringing about the good, old days is just a goodly draught of extra dry old tommy-rot."—*Fannie Hurst.*

YEARS ago there appeared an amusing story in a facetious periodical which will bear repetition. It was said that a high ecclesiastic on his deathbed persisted in calling his wife "Lulu," whereas her name was Jane. The attendant doctor soothingly assured the distressed wife that dying men frequently make these silly mistakes. In the ante-room the reporters were awaiting news of the end. When they pocketed their note books, the eldest reporter, not unlike a bishop himself, said to his younger colleagues. "Gentlemen, we had better leave out all reference to the charming Lulu. It would sound better to say that his reverence died singing "Rock of Ages."

This is, doubtless, an idle story for an empty day, but journalists are actually becoming more religious than the clergy, as may be seen almost any time by perusing the papers. Proprietors of periodicals insist on appealing to the masses, in order to promote the huge circulations which spell large dividends. Editors act on the suggestion and lay the unction on with a trowel. Unfortunately, editors are very busy men, so that matters relating to religion are far too

often left to cub-reporters, or to the cricketing correspondent when out of work.

This has produced a situation which is almost Gilbertian in its humorous effect. Owing to Free-thought criticism, the clergy have to be rather careful when they rush into print. For example, Dean Inge, who is an industrious penman, writes an almost every subject except the Christian Superstition. The Bishop of London, on the other hand, has contented himself latterly in having his photograph taken in full regalia in almost every position except standing on his head. The American evangelist, who used to add to the gaiety of this nation, has vanished before the conquering "Talkies." The handful of clergy who still seek to defend "Omnipotence" is using a pseudo-scientific vocabulary instead of the old outworn ecclesiastical claptrap which no longer cuts any cake with the present generation. But the cub-reporter does not know all these things. How should he, seeing that he works at his job fourteen hours a day, starting with a perusal of the police record at nine-o'clock in the morning, and finishing a report of a meeting of long-winded speechmakers near midnight. Eight hours' day may be good political propaganda, but the ordinary journalist works nearly eight hours before lunch, and eight hours afterwards.

That the clergy are accommodating themselves to the changing conditions is manifest. Recently, the Rev. W. F. Geikie-Cobb, Rector of St. Ethelburga, Bishopsgate, said openly that England was a priest-ridden country. And, in an evening newspaper, the Rev. J. C. Hardwick, a University Chaplain, burst out:—

We must not be misled by the idea that religion is necessarily a good thing: there have been, and still are, many religious practices which are about as bad (from the civilized point of view) as anything can be.

The cub-reporter, and the cricketing correspondent, do not write in this guarded manner. Like the journalist in the story they prefer "The Rock of Ages"—or, rather, "The Rock of Wages." Listen to a recent utterance (*Evening News*, London, November 9.) It is contained in a leading article in leaded type:—

When the population of the world was only two, it must have been a charming place. No rent, no taxes, no work, lots of food: then came the lapse of Adam and the first murder: and man has been blundering ever since.

This trash appears in a newspaper which has an enormous circulation, which almost entitles it to be considered the leading Metropolitan evening paper. The quotation is not, by any means, an isolated instance. The real trouble is that the power of the editors and writers has been constantly diminishing of late years, and the power of the commercially-minded proprietors constantly increasing. All have become slaves of the advertisement-manager and the publicity expert.

Journalists can neither do justice to themselves, nor serve the public honestly, in a press dominated by advertisers, and bossed by financiers, often innocent of any point-of-view except money-grabbing. In spite of their rivalry, the British newspapers are of one mind in suppressing advanced thought, which is thought, quite erroneously, to be fatal to those huge dividends so loved by company-promoters. The conspiracy against Freethought and Freethinkers is passing wonderful. The papers devote columns of print, and reproduce pictures, of the most brutal murder cases, and report verbatim all the salacious details of police-court cases. When the home supply runs short, they ransack American and Continental papers for "copy." In the dull days, when space is plentiful, there is

always the ghost story, a rehash of the old criminal trials, and "sermonettes."

Let there be no mistake on this point. Apart from the cub-reporters, and a handful of Irish Roman Catholics, who seek every opportunity of bolstering Popery, the writers of this trash do not all believe it. It is not entirely due to ignorance or fanaticism, but it is simply done to promote circulations running into millions. It is, in the last analysis, largely a matter of business. Journalists know better than that Freethinkers are all criminals or lunatics, but they wish to curry favour with the church and chapel goers. Even Socialists (who once were pioneers) follow this hateful practice. The turgid utterances of the President of the Cats' Meat Mens' Union, and the Secretary of the Executioners' Guild, are reported, but the leaders of Freethought never have a line devoted to their work, although such work is the necessary spade-work to all real progress.

Journalists are like the old soldiers of fortune who fought where the pay was highest. Journalists sell their brains instead of their muscles, but otherwise the resemblance is complete. They go from Tory to Liberal newspapers from Liberal to Labour, from Church periodicals to Nonconformist publications, and always flatter the prejudices and passions of their readers.

If editors who "tickle the ears of the groundlings" find it hard to make headway against the newspaper millionaires, it only shows the enormous difficulties that have to be contended with by those who battle against the tide of ignorance and superstition. By a strange anomaly the cheapening of the cost of papers has been accompanied by an increase in the cost of production, and it is this increase which has placed nearly all papers at the absolute mercy of the advertisers. Before the war the price of newspapers had reached an extraordinary low level, the English half-penny, the American cent, and the French sou. The cost of production was colossal even in those days. An attempt to establish *The Tribune*, an admirable and well-edited paper, involved an outlay of £80,000, and it was a failure. Whilst a few carts were sufficient for a newspaper a generation ago for supplying newsagents, daily journals now have to spend £2,000 weekly on circulation methods alone.

Journalists write for money. This simple fact explains why the entire press of a civilized country dismisses in a few lines such an awful catastrophe as an Indian famine, which means death from want of food of thousands of men, women, and children, and gives an exaggerated publicity to the domestic lives of royal personages. Whether an august person reads novels daily, or whether another equally exalted person has sugar in her tea, is a matter of little consequence, but the welfare of thousands of human beings is of profound importance.

When Freethinkers are mentioned in the press they are usually subjected to insolence and wilful misrepresentation. The so-called liberal and democratic London *Echo* invariably insulted the memory of a great man by calling him "Tom" Paine. When Gerald Massey died the press dubbed him a "Christian Socialist." He was neither the one nor the other. At the death of Anatole France a daily paper hoodwinked its readers by saying that although the great writer had been called a Pagan, he was haunted constantly by the preoccupation of Christ. A column could be filled with such journalistic sins of omission and commission. Such sorry work is simply literary prostitution, and it is only part of a system by which editors seek to curry favour with the more ignorant readers, and thus to ensure those huge circulations which eventually materialize into handsome bank-balances on the right side of the ledger.

MIMNERMUS.

Attenuated Religion.

CHARLES BRADLAUGH once said that no one ever sees a religion die. It gradually dissolves and fades away, or perpetuates itself in other forms.

Christianity has run for nearly two thousand years, but the ancient Egyptian religion ran for twice as long, and many of its elements entered into Christianity and received a further lease of life, continuing to exist to this day. If Christianity returned all it borrowed from other religions there would be nothing left but a few stupid and evil maxims, such as the advice not to resist evil, and to hate our parents, wives, and families.

Since the middle of the last century there has been a tremendous land-slide in religion; greater than any previous age has witnessed. During the previous century there was indeed a good deal of scepticism, and Deism became, if not fashionable, at least common among the philosophers. But this movement was practically confined to the educated and upper classes, and any attempt to enlighten the masses was severely punished. Neither were the masses educated enough to be enlightened. But to-day it is the public who provide the audience to the dispute. Every month a batch of books come from the press, dealing with religious problems, newspapers throw open their columns to discuss them, and the interest manifested is not that of previous ages, a desire for salvation and safety, but a desire to know the truth and a determination to have it. A desire to hear both sides of the question; not only the priest, but the scientist.

To-day the battle is a triangular one. There are the Catholics who found their authority on the Church of Rome, whose mouth-piece is the infallible Pope. The Fundamentalists, which include the Salvation Army and many of the Protestant sects, whose authority is the infallible Bible.

These two parties, hostile to one another, confront the Atheist, Secularist, and Rationalist Party, who repudiate all religion. The Churches who have no infallible Pope, or Bible, are bound to lose their followers to one or other of these three parties.

Between these hostile camps exist the legion of compromisers. Those who have been brought up in one or other of the religious camps, but have, regretfully, lost their faith. They would like to believe but their reason will not permit them to. Their beliefs were bound up with those recollections of childhood, upon which most people look back to as the best and happiest part of their lives. So they endeavour to construct a new belief, out of the ruins of the old one, that will not conflict too greatly with science and common sense. These new home-made beliefs are as varied in quality as they are abounding in quantity. All tastes are catered for. Some believe in God but reject a future life. Some believe in a future life but reject belief in a God. Others hold God to be a person, a heavenly father. Others declare that God is not a person at all, but—well I don't know what they do think about it, for at this point they become unintelligible. But what use, or interest, any one can find in a God who is not a person, is one of those things "no fellow can understand." One thing is clear, that so long as religion is taught during the early and most impressionable age of life, so there will always be a continual stream of these freak beliefs cropping up as a result of trying to harmonize some kind of religious belief with rational thought, later in life.

We have been reading two books which well illustrate our argument. They are both by distinguished scientists who have lost the faith they were brought

up in, and yet are reluctant to give up religious belief altogether. One is by Prof. J. S. Haldane, entitled *The Sciences and Philosophy*, constituting the Gifford Lectures for 1927-1928. The other is by Prof. Julian Huxley, the Biologist, and is entitled *Religion Without Revelation*. In the first-named book Prof. Haldane repudiates all belief in a future life, but retains belief in a God, but not in a personal God, and rejects all supernaturalism. Thus his God is nobody, and does nothing! He observes: "The theory that God is a person distinct from His creations, and created the Universe in time as a mechanical universe, seems to me to be a mere compromise with the Materialism for which visible reality is physical reality. There is no physical reality outside God: the assumption that there is such reality is only Materialism, which must be firmly and decidedly dissociated from religion."¹

In fact, he declares, the universe is a spiritual universe: "corresponding to what, in the language of religion, we call God." (p. 333.) Well if the Professor decides to call the universe God, and he derives any satisfaction in doing so, there is nothing to prevent him. For our part we cannot see anything in the universe as a whole, worthy of veneration or worship, and we are quite sure that the idea will never become popular. On the other hand we quite agree with the following attack on the soul theory. He declares:—

Belief in a soul existing in a material universe, but separable from it, brings us very soon into conflict with physical science, since we have accepted physical science, not as what it really is, a useful system of abstractions from reality, but as a full representation of reality itself. From its very nature physical science can attach no meaning to the existence of a soul or to its immortality, and if we seek for physical evidence of the soul's existence we can never find it. The history of so-called Spiritualism is, and can be, nothing but the record of illusion, and I shall not waste time by discussing it. Not even during life can physical science present any evidence of the existence of a soul. Consciousness is for it a quite mysterious accompaniment of certain extremely complex and remarkable physical processes occurring within the brain, and it has to leave the matter at this. . . . We cannot imagine a material world and a spiritual to exist side by side, as on the animistic theory.²

Which is just what Spiritualists, and Christians do believe. Prof. Haldane further observes. "I think there can be no doubt that scientific men as a body will continue to oppose religious beliefs in so far as these beliefs are associated with any element of what is known as the supernatural; and it may be long before the supernatural element is eliminated from religion as represented by the Churches." (p. 318.) And when we ask further: "whether certain of those beliefs are essentially connected with a good and sincere life, the only honest answer is in the negative. We can value the goodness and sincerity, and show in our lives that we value it, though we have discarded beliefs hitherto associated with religion, and even profess to be either Atheists or Agnostics in matters of religious belief. And when we see selfish lives associated with theological orthodoxy, we rightly regard the theological orthodoxy with contempt." (p. 282.)

And if we ask why we should act honestly, "the answer is that it is in our own wider and more real interest to act honestly and courteously." The other book we shall deal with in our next article.

W. MANN.

(To be concluded.)

¹ J. S. Haldane: *The Sciences and Philosophy*. p. 334.

² *Ibid.* pp. 298-299.

Luther Was Not a Puritan.

From "Plain Talk" (New York) August, 1929.

(Continued from page 726.)

But alas, in spite of Luther's tireless efforts to keep everything in connexion with Philip's marriage a secret, the bubble broke. A Hessian clergyman, under the assumed name of Neobulus, actually had the nerve to come out with a pamphlet in which he defended publicly the bigamy of Philip and the practice of polygamy!

Luther, upon learning of this open avowal of what he had held only in secret, choked with rage. What he himself had allowed was but an exception. He had never defended it for everybody. Indeed, he raved, "If anyone shall follow the advice of that wretch and take more than one wife, the devil shall prepare him a bath in the abyss of hell." Meanwhile Philip proceeded to take full advantage of the situation. He had marital relations with both of his "wives," save for five years that he spent in prison. His first wife gave birth to three children after his marriage to the second wife. The latter bore him seven sons and one daughter.

It is not to be wondered at that a church historian, Kolde, estimated: "It is highly probable that the beginning of the decline of Protestantism as a political power coincides with this marriage of Philip of Hesse."

After nearly four centuries of debate over the private affairs of the founder of Lutheranism, in which time he has often been accused of having led a very wicked and dissolute life, the majority of reputable scholars are now agreed that Luther's personal morals were far ahead of those of his age—that he was about 99.44 per cent pure—even then.

But an analysis of his mental gyrations discloses a mind held tightly in the grip of a deep-seated complex on matters of sex. From his own testimony and that of his friends we learn that he was of a particularly ardent nature and had great difficulty in keeping himself under control. His frank assertion gives the key to much of his life:—

It is far easier to endure a prison than to burn with hot passion—I myself have experienced this difficulty. The more I mortified my body, the greater the efforts I made to conquer my desires, the more fiercely they impelled me.

An adolescent sense of sin had finally driven him to take the monastic vow in the order of St. Augustine. His wiser father had remonstrated against this act and advised marriage instead. As was to be expected, Luther found no peace for his body or soul in the monastery; he chafed under its restraints.

Almost immediately following the contest at the Council of Worms his letters reveal a growing antagonism toward the monastic system, particularly the doctrine of celibacy. His experience as a monk had taught him much. In a letter to Melancthon, dated from Wartburg, August 1, 1521, he wrote in commenting on Paul's advice "It is better to marry than to burn": "I, too, desire above all things to come to the aid of the monks and nuns, so greatly do I pity these wretched men and these boys and girls who are vexed with pollutions and burnings."

In November of the same year he wrote a long letter to his father as the dedication of his book *Treatise on Monastic Vows*. In this the son reminded his father:—

It is now sixteen years since I became a monk, taking the vow without your knowledge and against your will. In your paternal love you were fearful about my weakness because I was a youth, just

entering my twenty-second year; that is, to use St. Augustine's words, I was still "clothed in hot youth," and you had learned from numerous examples that this way of life turned out sadly for many. You were determined to tie me down with an honourable and wealthy marriage.

The son had come to regret having gone into the monastery. As a compensation for those years of repression he started to break up the system of celibacy. He turned to assisting nuns in their escape from the convents, and he advised everybody to marry. We find him thus addressing a professor at Lichtenberg who was contemplating matrimony:—

Now chastity is not in our power, as little as are God's other wonders and graces, but we are made for marriage; as the Scripture says, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make a helpmeet for him."

Whoso, therefore, considers himself a man, and believes himself included in that general term, should hear what God his creator decrees for him, saying that it is not good for him to be alone, but that he should multiply. This is the Word of God, through Whose power seed is created in man's body and the burning desire for the woman kindled and kept alight, which cannot be restrained by vows or laws. For it is God's law and doing . . . Even the impotent we see are full of natural desire; yea, the more impotent they are the more they desire to be with women, which is natural, as we always desire most what we can least have.

Therefore we see that it is true that whoso will live alone undertakes an impossible task and runs counter to God's Word and the nature God gave him. Those who wrestle with God and nature fall, and are full of fornication and all uncleanness until they are drowned in their own vices and driven to despair. Therefore, such a vow against God and nature is impossible and void.

This advice was given March 27, 1525, and it is not surprising that in a little more than two months after such an exposition on marriage Luther himself had entered into that most holy and blessed relationship.

As has been stated, Luther had been boldly advising the monks and nuns to leave the cloisters, which many of them did. Some of the nuns at Nimbschen wrote to him asking for his aid in escape. He referred them to one, Leonard Coppe, a wealthy burgher of Torgau. Now, the abduction of a nun was a capital offence, but on the night of April 4-5, 1523, Coppe, with the assistance of two other men, helped twelve of the nuns to get away. Nine of them were brought to Luther's establishment at Wittenberg. He protected them and championed their cause. Some went home or to relatives, and finally only three remained.

A little later, on April 16, in a letter to a close friend, George Spalatin, he wrote jokingly about the presence of the three nuns in his home. That Luther's actual relationships with them were comparatively innocent we may take for granted.

You write me about my marriage. Do not be surprised if I, so famous as a lover, do not weep, though it is really wonderful that I who write so much about marriage and have so much intercourse with women should not turn into a woman, let alone marry one. If you wish for my example you already have it. For I have had three wives at once and loved them so hard that I drove two away to get other husbands. On the third I have a precarious hold, but she, too, may soon be torn away from me. It is really you who are the timid lover, not daring to marry even one. But take care, lest I, even the old bachelor, should get ahead of lusty bridegrooms like you, for God is accustomed to do what we least expect. I say this seriously to encourage you.

Though she was not his original choice, Luther's thoughts had become centered upon the remaining

nun, Catherine von Bora. She had had several love affairs, one of them quite unfortunate. Erasmus said that the monk had been led astray by a wonderfully charming girl, but her portrait does not substantiate that verdict. She, however, proved to be a very capable wife and devoted mother. The first actual announcement of Luther's matrimonial intentions are recorded in a missive, May 4, 1525, to a John Rühel at Mansfield. The note read: "I will take my Katy to wife to spite the devil."

The bridegroom was somewhat self-conscious in the new venture, which was perhaps natural enough. He blamed the entire affair on the Lord: "Despite the fact that I was otherwise minded, the Lord has suddenly and unexpectedly contracted a marriage for me with Catherine von Bora the nun . . . only pray for me, who have to bear so many slanders and reproaches because of this deed that God has done."

To Amsdorff the newlywed insisted: "I married to gratify my father, who asked me to marry and leave him descendants. . . . I was not carried away by passion, for I do not love my wife that way, but esteem her as a friend."

He announced to the old burgher of Torgau:—

God has suddenly and unexpectedly caught me in the bond of holy matrimony. I intend to celebrate with a wedding breakfast on Thursday. That all may be merry, my Lord Catherine and I kindly beg you to send us, at my cost and as quickly as possible, a barrel of Torgau beer. I will pay the transportation and everything. I would have sent a conveyance for it but knew not where I should find the right kind, for the beer must be kept from jolting and cool; if it is not good, to punish you I shall make you drink it all.

As has been suggested, in looking about for a wife Catherine had not been Luther's first choice. In 1538, thirteen years after their marriage, he was rather heartless in a frank confession:—

Had I wished to marry fourteen years ago, I should have chosen Ave von Schoenfeld, now wife of Basil Axt. I never loved my wife, but suspected her of being proud (as she is), but God willed me to take pity on the poor abandoned girl, and he has made my marriage turn out most happily.

In the years following his marriage Luther gave out tons of advice on the immortal theme. Many of his letters and table talks on this subject have never been translated into English, for the simple reason that they are too coarse and obscene. He tells one friend how to pick out a wife:—

If you burn, take a wife. You doubtless would have her to be handsome, pious, and rich; you may find such a wife, dear friend, in a picture—a wife with rosy cheeks and white legs. This sort of wives is of the most pious kind too; but what is the use of them in the kitchen or the bedchamber? To rise betimes and marry young are what no man ever repents of doing.

On another occasion he commented, "The hair is the finest ornament women have. Of old, virgins used to wear it loose, except when they were in mourning. I like women to let their hair fall down their back; 'tis a most agreeable sight."

That it took the reformer some little while to become accustomed to the change that marriage wrought, may be gleaned from his statement that "In the first year of marriage one has strange thoughts. At table he thinks: 'Formerly I was alone, now I am with someone.' In bed, when he wakes, he sees beside him a pair of pigtailed that he did not see before."

(Reverend) RAY H. ABRAMS.

(To be concluded.)

Acid Drops.

There was a little upset over the Armistice commemoration in Leigh, Lancs. The Mayor happens to be a Roman Catholic. A united meeting of the Anglican and the Free Churches had been arranged to take place, but this was countered by the Mayor, who said he was going to preach at the cenotaph, when any minister would be welcome, but only as citizens. The service was to be Secular, and so there could be no friction, he also said that "Armistice celebration should be of a civil character."

So far, so good. But the retort of the various ministers of religion is that the Mayor, being a Roman Catholic will not go anywhere but to a Roman Catholic service, and as he cannot have this will not have any. This is quite probably correct, but the incident will serve to show, to anyone capable of reflection, what a lovely thing religion is, particularly the Christian variety. For the Armistice celebrations should be apart from all religion, and not turned into a religious service, which is a direct insult to large numbers of the soldiers who fell in the war. All were in the war as citizens, not as sectarians. But the striking thing is the object lesson, that while men of all classes and creeds can unite in the promotion of a purely secular object, the one thing on which they cannot and will not unite is religion. Men will live together, they will fight together, they will die together, the one thing they will not do is to pray together.

It is very difficult to get Christians to speak the truth where their religion is concerned. It will be remembered that General Smuts, speaking at Oxford, said that the only man to fight the native medicine-man is the scientific medicine-man. Medical missions are the only missions for Africa. He also pointed out that the missionaries had made little or no progress. The meaning of General Smuts was quite clear, it was that if missions were to be sent to Africa, the only ones of any use were medical missions, not because of their religion, but because they would have trained medical men associated with them. But we see this is being turned by some of the religious papers into the statement that the missionaries, who take with them some medical missionaries are the only ones that can civilize Africa. That is not quite the same thing; but we suppose it is as near the truth as one can expect a Christian missionary to get.

Mrs. Philip Snowden addressing a Sunday school meeting at Harrogate said:—

The Bible was the greatest collection of poetry and biography . . . ever produced for the edification of the human race.

which is about the finest collection of clotted nonsense that anyone could put into a few words. But we expect that Mrs. Snowden knows that when speaking on the Bible to a Christian audience, any kind of nonsense does.

But the following, from the same lady, strikes us as being gratuitously absurd—unless it is intended as a covert attack on Bible teaching to the young:—

It was monstrously cruel to take a child at its most plastic period and stamp upon it something that was false, or only half-true, as if it were the whole truth, for such a child would then be at the mercy of the cultivated Agnostic or of the tap-room variety, the coarse and vulgar critics of religion with arguments looking so much like common sense.

So far as the children who get Bible teaching in day school or Sunday school, there are very few indeed who do not get half truths or whole falsehoods forced upon them. We do not know what exactly Mrs. Snowden has in mind when she speaks of the tap-room variety of

Agnostics, and the coarse and vulgar critics of Christianity, but if they are more vulgar and coarser in their methods, and greater liars than a large number of evangelists, they must indeed be worth seeing.

Christian teaching is so helpful. Thus the *Church Times*, "Hatred is a Christian duty if it is excited by things that are hateful." But what are things that are hateful? Why, things that Christians hate. We feel quite indebted to the *Church Times*. It makes things so clear, explains so much in Christian history and character.

Sir Charles Trevelyan, the Minister of Education, says that he desires to keep education out of the bog of religious controversy. He may have this desire, but how will he do it with this and that sect clamouring for this or that type of religious instruction in the schools. If the Government really wishes to secure this, it should take its courage in both hands and go for a policy of absolute neutrality in religious matters, in other words, Secular Education. But to secure votes, this Government, like previous ones, has bound itself to do something for this or that church and as in the medieval legend when one sells one's soul to the devil, the devil always has its price. Yet little courage might settle the education controversy for ever. For it is not the parents who demand religious instruction, it is the priests.

Where the Spirit of God is, freedom is, says the Rev. Raymond Taunton. He must have studied a special kind of history in his college days. Otherwise he would have heard something about the Inquisition, the butchery of the Covenanters, the migration of the Pilgrim Fathers, the Blasphemy Laws, the Lord's Day Observance Acts, etc., etc. These things were all products of men who believed their hearts were chock-full of the aforesaid spirit. Like oil and water, religion and freedom can't mix.

"Better be silent and be thought a fool," says Mr. Justice Eve, than open your mouth and remove all doubt." Many a parson seems to prefer to "remove all doubt." On the other hand, many a man has built up a reputation for wisdom by keeping his mouth shut. The silent man is often silent simply because he has nothing to say.

Our medical psychologists will excite the enmity of the Fundamentalists, if they go about disturbing Christian notions. Dr. W. Potts says that "child is not born with a bundle of original sin, but not understanding our moral codes." Many cases of delinquency, he says, have a physical explanation. The physical disorder must be put right before an attempt is made to cure their minds. We take it that medical psychologists have room in their science for the Christian theory that there is an evil spirit called the Devil running around whispering wicked temptations in youthful (and adult) ears?

A pious writer thinks the B.B.C. deserve the thanks of the Churches for bringing to scores of thousands of feeble and bedridden people the comforts of religion. Well, what about the many more thousands of such people whom religion does not comfort nor interest? They have as much right to be catered for as the others. But the B.B.C. leaves them with nothing during the hours of church service, and it gives them no alternative when the wireless service is in full blast. This is an illuminating instance of Christian selfishness and inconsiderateness. And there is not a single parson in the land who would condemn it!

The *Recorder* thinks that the religious situation in England to-day is strikingly like that in the eighteenth

century previous to the Evangelical Revival. Seemingly, the writer sees grounds for hope in this. For eighteenth century scepticism preceded a religious revival, and therefore twentieth century indifference may be the forerunner to a revived interest in religion. On the other hand the revival in religion meant revived strength to the more ignorant aspects of religion only. On the other hand, Freethinking went on developing from Deism to Atheism, which left religion more hopelessly in the rear than ever.

A prize-winning essay in a religious weekly contains the following:—

The forces of sheer Atheism (as distinct from that Agnosticism which at least is humble and often teachable) are marshalling as never before in the history of mankind.

Presumably, a "sheer Atheist" is one who has no use whatever for the sheer nonsense of Christianity, while the humble Agnostic is teachable because he is uncertain whether sheer nonsense is sheer nonsense or not. We hope all "humble" Agnostics will appreciate this kindly pat on the back. They have certainly earned it.

Lord Gorell says that schoolmasters would, he imagines, prefer to teach a sceptical questioning pupil rather than one who accepted things, whether he understood them or not, from sheer apathy of preference. A few may, especially if they are Freethinkers. The one thing we are certain of is that all Christian (and semi-Christian) teachers would vote the sceptical pupil an unmitigated nuisance while religion was being imparted. Still, it is the pupils who accept what they are told who are most useful to the churches; and every truly Christian school ought to encourage that kind.

The end of all true education, says the Archbishop of Canterbury, must be the character of all those who are taught. It goes without saying what the Archbishop's notion of a person with a right and proper character really is. It is one who attends church regularly, subscribes freely, believes all the Church of England dogmas, and is willing to take in exactly what a priest tells him is right. A person who does all this couldn't help but be the possessor of "true education."

A Nonconformist reviewer says he wishes most novelists would not write half so much as they do, and that many would never even begin. We daresay some such sentiments as these occur to sensitive gentlemen who edit for the young the work of those Hebrew novelists who wrote the Holy Bible.

Speaking of the Bishop of London's recent book, *Why am I a Christian?* a reviewer remarks that the Bishop has a genius for popular presentation of Christian essentials; and the reviewer commends the book as suitable to place before inquiring young persons. Well, we fancy the Bishop's true genius is in another direction, which we have often mentioned. We have no doubt that his book is suitable for the young—the younger the reader, the more suitable the book! The Bishop's mind is in tune with infancy. That is the result of taking Christ's advice to be childish too literally.

Of Emil Ludwig's book, *July, 1914*, a writer says:—

It shows us the hidden motive springs of diplomats, and lays bare the lies and the chicanery that engineered the war. It is an unflattering commentary upon human nature, but a graphic warning against the stupidity of secret diplomacy.

If lies, chicanery, hidden motives, and secret diplomacy are some causes of war, the usual guff by parsons about Christ and Peace does not strike us as likely to be any

use in removing the causes of war. Apparently, divine inspiration is incapable of suggesting anything really effective in the way of war prevention.

At a recent "speech day," the headmistress of a girls' high school at Gloucester affirmed that the modern girl is honest, good-hearted, willing, ready to learn, and pleased always to give help. Still, all these virtues will not save the modern girl from a singeing in hell, if she laughs at the notion of "Salvation." Ye must be born again!

Spare a penn'orth of pity for Canon Spencer Elliott. He wastes an enormous amount of time, he says, over parochial squabbles. Let him be of good cheer. The Lord specializes in compensation for those who endure the sorrows of life with Christian fortitude. The Canon should count his blessings, and be thankful that the squabbles are all Christian ones, and that Freethinkers never add to them.

In the opinion of Dr. Lyttelton, fifty years have seen an extraordinary improvement in the physical and moral training of the young. Possibly, the reason may be that our trainers of youth are utilizing physiological and psychological discoveries for the purpose of fitting youth to be useful citizens of one world at a time. The former practice of training the young merely to play the part of perfect angels in an assumed heaven had poor results on physique or morals.

The Bishop of Peterborough declares he would like to close the mouths of educational theorists for the next twenty years, and place an embargo on all educational conferences. Maybe, the recent discussion of the question of Secular Education has subconsciously influenced the good Bishop's opinions. Just to cheer his lordship, we will mention that the theory of Secular Education is one which is bound to crop up at many more educational conferences. For the theory is gaining support among teachers who are tired of playing lackey to the parson.

Dr. F. W. Norwood dolefully remarks that present-day habits of life hardly give religion a chance. He won't mind our adding that present-day habits have sprung up because people have no belief in religion and no use for it. As a footnote, it may be mentioned that present-day habits of life are not necessarily bad merely because they hardly give religion or the Churches a chance. On the contrary!

A Nonconformist journal says there are many well-placed people to whom organized Christianity is no matter of concern at all. For our part, we see nothing in this to weep over. Our regret is that so many of the "well-placed" should lack mental and moral courage to declare how they stand toward religion and the Churches. If they would but speak out boldly, the lot of many less well-placed who do declare their opinions might be made less hard. We know that the courage of the few has made it easier for the timid to speak. But conversely, the bolder the timid act, the less likely are the courageous few to be penalized.

The *Methodist Recorder*, in a mood of sackcloth and ashes, says:—

We live in days when a spirit of despair has settled on many churches. The indifference of the masses is painfully evident. No stranger crosses the threshold of many of the Free Churches of this country. Methodist Churches are not generally regarded by men and women in trouble to-day as power-houses of salvation. Hundreds of ministers are conscious of a sense of impotence. Any serious effort, in many quarters, to reach the outsider is not made—hardly thought of as possible.

The B.B.C. has been propagating the Gospels for several

years to all and sundry, and this is how things stand to-day! After reading the *Recorder's* summing up, could anyone possibly doubt that an overwhelming majority of wireless listeners want, and are deeply grateful for, broadcast religious items?

Sir Henry Lunn, a Methodist, has been writing on *Is God necessary to Prayer*. Sir Henry, it appears, has read an article in the *Christian Century*, in which a Mr. J. H. Holmes gives a "humanistic" interpretation of prayer. Mr. Holmes contends that prayer concerns our whole mental attitude, and has nothing to do with God. Prayer, is the clear formulation in the mind of what we mean and desire; and it is the fixing of our attention consciously on these themes that brings the attainment of our desires. This seems to be roughly Mr. Holmes' view. Sir Henry Lunn, however, does not agree with this view. Prayer, he thinks, concerns more than selfish desires. The true ideal of prayer, he says, is that of Thomas Aquinas, the schoolman of the Middle Ages. While Aquinas was praying in a church at Naples, he had a vision of "our Lord" crucified, who said to him: "Thou has written well of me, Thomas; what reward wilt thou have therefor?" Thomas replied: "Nothing Lord, but thyself." Sir Henry appears to fancy that this sort of prayer was not selfish. On the contrary, we think modern psychologists would say it was. Bear in mind that Thomas firmly believed that unless he professed belief in Christ he would be tortured in Hell. The "Nothing Lord, but Thyself" connotes that Thomas wanted as reward a rock-bottom guarantee that he was sure of Heaven and certain of escaping Hell.

The Mender of Windows.

I'm strolling through the suburbs,
As oft I've strolled before;
Upon my back the trellised rack
That holds my glittering store.
I mend your broken windows,
Or whether large or small,
And folk to me race merrily,
In answer to the call—

Another damaged window, another broken pane!
But here comes laughing Charlie to put 'em in again—
To put 'em in again

And flood your homes with Light—

With a big pane here, and a little pane there,
With a little gain here, and a big gain there;

But whether big or little

God's sunshine warm and bright!

Thanks be to laughing Charlie,

Thanks be to laughing Charlie,

With the heart so gay and light!

Most folk have broken windows

Through which they look on life;

Some bad, some sad; some maimed and mad,

All torn with grief and strife.

But I've the skill to mend 'em,

With putty made from Mirth;

And Hope's clear glass which makes us pass

Love's sunshine to the earth!

Another damaged window, another broken pane!
But here comes laughing Charlie to put 'em in again—
To put 'em in again

And flood your homes with Light—

With a big pane here, and a little pane there,
With a little gain here, and a big gain there;

But whether big or little

God's sunshine warm and bright!

Thanks be to laughing Charlie,

Thanks be to laughing Charlie,

With the heart so gay and light!

J. M. STUART-YOUNG.

Testimonial to Mr. Chapman Cohen.

OUR Sixth List of Acknowledgments is not so long this week, but fairly substantial, largely due to the donation from a very old friend of our leader and our Cause. "There is room, still room," for many more such efforts.

SIXTH LIST OF ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

Previously acknowledged, £882 15s. 1d.; George F. Laws (B.C.), \$10 £2; Chas. S. Knight (N. Rhodesia), £5; Elizabeth Morrison, 10s.; G.F.H.McC., £100; Fred C. Wykes, £1; L.M., 5s.; George J. Finch £1 1s.; John Campbell, 2s. 6d.; Joshua Ratcliff (Victoria), £5; T.H.E. (Wolverhampton), £2; Anon, 10s.; Total to November 18, £1,000 3s. 7d.

Please write to the Hon. Secretary at once if any Donation, up to above date, has not been acknowledged here.

Here are a few more extracts, which I hope the Editor will find space for:—

J. Lazarnick says: "Mr. Cohen has devoted his life to the enlightenment of humanity, and has given of his best for more years than I care to remember. His sole reward in the past has been the sure knowledge of the excellence of his cause, and I am pleased to have this opportunity of showing my appreciation of his work."

G.E.T. writes: "The amount is small, but means, at all costs, some sacrifice for me during the coming week, and indeed in such a cause I couldn't do less than offer something that hurts just a little bit."

Among the veterans of the Movement I am a mere infant, but yet have to thank Mr. Chapman Cohen for six or seven years peace and understanding such as I have enjoyed since first I was introduced to his works; and, by the help of his crystal-clear thought and expression, enabled to climb out of the holy nightmare I had previously experienced. Freethought can give a hopeful, wide-eyed happiness all its own, such as no religionist ever dreamt of and in this respect Mr. Chapman Cohen has indeed been my 'Saviour.'

Mrs. Taylor says: "I wish it were more, because no money can repay all we owe to Mr. Cohen for the pleasure and instruction he has given us."

Franklin Steiner (Chicago) writes: "The *Freethinker* is the only paper I take of which I read every word it contains."

George F. Laws in far off B.C. [not "Before Christ"] sends a most interesting letter, in which he says, "It may serve to illustrate the position of one whose appreciation is greater than his apparent display of the same in a pecuniary sense. I am middle aged, a bachelor, a veteran of two wars, in receipt of a small pension. I have a small landed property of a few acres, somewhat after the pattern pictured 2,000 years ago, by the poet Horace: 'A portion of land, not very large, where there is a garden and running water near the house, and a good grove of trees'—And, as that amiable Pagan reflected in one of his Odes: 'It is well for him to whom God has offered, with a sparing hand, what is sufficient.'"

Elizabeth Morrison says: "I greatly appreciate this opportunity of acknowledging my sincere gratitude for all the help and comfort I have found in the pages of the *Freethinker*—especially from the writings of Mr. Cohen."

Next week I hope to be able to give a date for the closing of this Fund.

W. J. W. EASTERBROOK,
Hon. Secretary,
"Hillfield," Burraton,
Saltash, Cornwall.

To whom all communications must be sent.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

C. NEILL.—Your reply seems quite to the point. So long as religion is in State-supported schools Roman Catholic schools have the right to the statement as the other sects receive. It would be well, however, if the public were better informed as to the way in which Roman Catholics manage their schools, and to say what exactly becomes of the subsidies given by the State.

W. NELTHROP.—There is a chapter on the Quantum theory in Bertrand Russel's *Analysis of Matter*, and almost any work dealing with Relativity will deal with it also. You might also consult Russel's *A.B.C. of Relativity*, but we do not recall a popular work at a low price dealing with the subject.

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

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

When the services of the National Secular Society in connexion with Secular Burial Services are required, all communications should be addressed to the Secretary, Mr. R. H. Rosetti, giving as long notice as possible.

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.

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

Lecture notices must reach 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.5, by the first post on Tuesday, or they will not be inserted.

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.

Next Sunday (December 1) Mr. Cohen lectures in the Town Hall, Stratford. His subject will be "Morality Without God." The lecture will commence at 7 o'clock, and we trust that Freethinkers will do what they can to bring one or two Christian friends with them. Mr. Cohen's engagements in the provinces have prevented his lecturing much in London this season. He may be able to find one or two dates in the New Year.

The third of Mr. Cohen's lectures on the New Materialism brought a good audience to the Secular Hall, Leicester, the building being comfortably filled. Mr. Hassell occupied the chair. The concluding lecture of the course will be delivered to-day (November 24).

The weather was at its worst on Monday last at Liverpool, but Picton Hall was comfortably filled, to listen to the debate between the Rev. Mr. Pugh and Mr. Cohen. Mr. Pugh proved himself to be a good humoured opponent. And while each speaker dealt with the other faithfully, and to the evident satisfaction of the audience, there was no ill-feeling on the part of either. A descriptive report will probably appear in our next issue.

Mr. R. H. Rosetti will be in Liverpool this week end, and will lecture in the Picton Hall on Sunday evening, at 7.30, subject, "Where are the Gods?"

The West Ham Branch has arranged a Social for Saturday evening, November 30, in the Earldom (small) Hall, Earldom Grove, Forest Gate, E. The programme will consist of Songs, Dances, Games, etc. Commence at 7.0 prompt. Admission is free, and all Freethinkers and their friends will be welcomed.

In answer to those correspondents who want to know whether the medium Margery, referred to by Mr. Shaw Desmond in his debate with Mr. Chapinan Cohen, has ever been exposed, Houdini, shortly before his death published his experiences with her under the title of *Margery*. The publishers are Dunninger Enterprise, 860 Cauldwell Avenue, New York City. Price 1 dollar.

By far the best article in the new issue of the *R.P.A. Annual* is the leading one by Mr. Bertrand Russel, on *Has Religion Made Useful Contributions to Civilization?* The article is completely straightforward, and is destitute of the half-lights and compromising qualifications of which so many are fond. Mr. C. E. M. Joad contributes an article, "The Origin and Development of Religion," that is, for him, remarkably free from self-contradictions, while Professor Laski, Dr. Yearsley, and others make up an interesting number. The price of the Annual is, as usual, 1s.

We have left for separate notice an article by Professor J. B. S. Haldane, on "Some Reflections on Materialism," an article really striking because of its triumphant vindication of the truth that one may reflect upon a subject without showing any indication of understanding it. Professor Haldane admits that in physics, astronomy, and chemistry, Materialism has been "pretty completely successful," and says that no facts inconsistent with it have been discovered in biology. One would have thought that having "made good" in the departments wherein knowledge is most exact, the same thing would happen elsewhere as our knowledge approached the same degree of exactitude. Instead of that we get this:—

I am not myself a Materialist because, if Materialism is true, it seems to me that we cannot know it is true. If my opinions are the result of the chemical processes going on in the brain, they are determined by the laws of chemistry, not those of logic.

The confusion of thought shown in such a passage is pretty hopeless, and the sight of a leading scientist assenting that the laws of a complex assembly of parts must be those of the parts that makes one marvel at the paralysing effects of "Materialism" on the minds of some people. Otherwise it might have occurred to Professor Haldane that just as the grouping of atoms into molecules sets going an alteration in the "laws" manifested, while the growing complexity of molecular groupings operates in the same direction. The really funny thing about Professor Haldane is that he admits that even in the region of history Materialism has met "with a considerable measure of success." But as history really does involve psychology as well as other things, we fail to see why Materialism is admitted in connexion with history, but ruled out of psychology apart from history. On the whole we are left wondering what is the stupefying effects of "Materialism" that it makes so many scientists forget their logic and their science? Also why do so many public men take the trouble they do to assure the world that they are not Materialists? They are not nearly so anxious to tell the public they are not Christians. If they did, what a change there would be!

To-day there is but one road to salvation: that criticism itself, is made to assist in the reconstruction of the plentitude of life—*Count Hermann Keyserling*.

Sexual Superstitions in Savage Society.

THE physical and psychological differences of male and female are phenomena of ancient standing. Manifested in multitudinous forms, sex antagonism survives in savage, barbarous, and civilized communities alike. That blended sense of mystery and insatiable curiosity which surrounds the processes of reproduction prevails in all stages of culture. Even among the Indo-European peoples, manners and customs concerning sex have plainly descended from prehistoric times. Woman has ever proved a puzzle to man, and some of our greatest philosophers have admitted their inability to fathom the depths of feminine psychology. Some, indeed, have abandoned the problem as an eternal mystery; while Meredith in the *Ordeal of Richard Feverel*, laments that woman will be the last creature to be civilized by man.

Despite the palpable truth that woman is essential to male contentment, and serves as the mother of the race, men's railings against women have resounded throughout the ages. Goethe's marvellous "Elective Affinities" evidently influenced the views of the late Ernest Crawley. In *The Mystic Rose*, a new edition of which has recently appeared in two volumes, revised and considerably enlarged by Theodore Besterman, this passage occurs: "In the history of the sexes there have always been at work the two complementary physical forces of attraction and repulsion; man and woman may be regarded, and not fancifully, as the highest sphere in which this law of physics operates; in love the two sexes are drawn to each other by an irresistible sympathy, while in other circumstances there is more or less of antipathy and segregation, due to and enforced by human ideas of human relations."

The separation of the sexes that prevails among primitive peoples seems surprising to the modern mind. We learn that in the Sandwich Islands and elsewhere, women are regarded as something alien to the male sex. Many disabilities are thrust upon them, and they pursue their domestic lives alone. The Marquesas Islanders carefully seclude their meeting-places from the contaminating presence of the weaker vessels, while anything handled by the husband or father is to woman strictly taboo. In Tahiti and the Society Islands, even the head of the husband was holy, and no woman was ever permitted to touch it. The residence of a Maori chief must never be polluted by the presence of women. In Fiji it is highly derogatory for a man to sleep regularly at home, or even for a native to remain with his wives in the hut under the cover of darkness. It is alleged that sexual congress must be confined to "the depths of the forest, unknown to any but the two." In New Caledonia men associate with men, and women with women, and the wife works and sleeps apart from her spouse. Indeed, examples of the segregation of the sexes have been gathered from every part of the savage world. From Australia, New Guinea, New Britain, the Solomon Islands, the Torres Straits, and many other places, a solemn separation of the sexes is recorded.

In Cambodia it is unlucky for a wife to rest on her husband's couch, and in Siam it is accounted dangerous to "pass under a woman's clothes hung out to dry." But if women usually suffer the penalties of taboo, the menfolk are not always exempt, for they are liable to penalties, if the tribal rules are disregarded. Those aspects of sexual solidarity which are signalized by taboo have led to several striking results. It is said that among the extinct Tasmanians, when a wife was chastised by her partner, the

whole female population scorned and derided him with their tongues. With the Kaffirs, the ill-used wife claimed shelter from her father until her erring spouse made full atonement. In this connexion, Crawley quotes from Maclean as follows: "Nor would many European husbands like to be subjected to the usual discipline on such occasions. The offending husband must go in person to ask for his wife. He is instantly surrounded by the women of the place, who cover him at once with reproaches and blows. Their nails and fists may be used with impunity, for it is the day of the female vengeance, and the belaboured delinquent is not allowed to resist. He is not permitted to see his wife, but is sent home, with an intimation of what cattle are expected of him, which he must send before he can demand his wife again."

The genesis of a common law for the protection of women may be discerned among the Kunama in savage Africa, where an agent watches the wife's interests, and has power to fine the erring husband. The haughty attitude of the women is evidenced in the Beni-Amer stock. With them, it is allowable for the wife to exact a present from her spouse when he wishes to exercise his marital rights, and a gift is demanded when the husband expresses himself in harsh and violent language. Also, he may be shut out of the house all night in the most inclement weather until he settles his account. The ladies act in unison in times of trouble, and "it goes without saying that the husband is always in the wrong." The women, it is stated, display the supremest contempt for mere men, and it is thought shameful for a wife to exhibit in public her affection for her spouse.

These are, probably, extreme instances, but they illustrate the fundamental uniformity of human nature throughout the world. Crawley opined that sexual segregation tends to develop into positive antagonism. The Indians of California certainly have great difficulty in curbing their insurgent women. Native races elsewhere have adopted measures for the purpose of compelling their squaws to bow to male authority. Awe-inspiring ceremonies, and even the fear of sorcery itself are invoked to restrain rebellious women. Associations for men only have been established, where plans could be arranged for the repression of female insubordination. Nor are the women without their special clubs where they ventilate their grievances and prepare their reprisals.

Among the Aborigines of Australia sex totems abound. A species of small lizard is the totem in Port Lincoln, the male animal being sacred to the men and the female to the women. When enraged with the women the men kill the female totem, and then the infuriated women destroy the male totem in revenge. Sexual exclusiveness is also displayed by the Greenlanders in their religious practices. But the most marked manifestations of sexual segregation are met with in savage Australia, where the totem revered by the men most commonly proves anathema to the women. For example, every Australian Kurnia "had not only his own personal totem, but all the men jointly had the emu-wren as their sex totem, and all the women similarly had the superb warbler. When men and women quarrelled, the latter would kill an emu-wren to spite the men. When they returned to the camp with the dead animal, the men attacked them and a fierce fight was the result." Sex totems act as protective spirits to their votaries.

The domestic arts of savage peoples serve to erect a barrier between the sexes. Occupations are specially reserved for one sex or the other. The contemptuous expression in vogue among ourselves, "That's a woman's work," represents a feeling almost universal among savages. With them, however, the re-

striction of certain forms of labour to either sex has usually a strong religious significance. We find that in British Guiana "cooking is the province of the women; on one occasion when the men were perforce compelled to bake, they were only persuaded to do so with the utmost difficulty, and were ever after pointed to as old women."

Clothing of certain kinds is sometimes taboo to the men, and the instruments of fishing and warfare strictly taboo to the women. In the Marquesas Islands the penalty is death to a woman who uses a canoe. It is commonly believed in Africa that the cattle sicken if tended by women. Among most of the pastoral races the milkmaid is consequently unknown. In Morocco, Dr. Westernmark found the women genuinely horrified at the suggestion that his native servants should procure water. They would on no account permit men to perform "a woman's business."

During the hunting season, and in times of war women are strictly avoided in savage communities. Contact with women is held to prove fatal to success in hunting and in arms. Among the Hebrews, the men of war were denied all intercourse with the sex in periods of strife. When Ahimelech the priest brought bread to the fugitive David it remained hallowed "if the young men have kept themselves at least from women." (1 Samuel xxi, 4.) Also, a warrior was compelled to cleanse himself before returning to the camp, if weakened by a seminal discharge during slumber. For "when evening cometh on, he shall wash himself with water: and when the sun is down, he shall come into the camp again." (Deut. xiii. 9-11.) Robertson Smith has noted the persistence of similar customs in Arabia right down to modern days.

Warriors in Fiji kept their women at a distance as their company was deemed enervating. Even in our own age this belief has its adherents. The author of that clever and learned satire, *The Obliviad*, the late Dr. William Leech, once told the writer that he was firmly convinced that the effeminacy commonly ascribed to curates, was not due to a studious life, but resulted from their constant attendance on sentimental and semi-erotic females.

In their unawareness of the natural virility which stimulates the processes of reproduction, savages constantly surround themselves with doubt and misgiving. With some North American races sexual intercourse proves fatal to the powers of the magician. Even in the Roman Catholic Church, complete celibacy, at least in theory, is essential to the priestly profession.

Pregnant women are taboo in many regions of the lower culture. In various tribes in Brazil women are set apart from their spouses so soon as signs of pregnancy appear. The first pregnancy is exceptionally fearsome in Costa Rica. The child-bearing woman is a menace to all, and every death is placed to her account. Indeed, while she remains in this state, a sinister influence encircles her. At birth men are seldom present, and all the offices appertaining to delivery are restricted to women. Sometimes, only old females are permitted to attend. And at this crisis women are peculiarly subject to the visitation of baleful spirits.

These perils remain after the birth of the child, while at the age of puberty, the most weird ceremonies are deemed necessary to guard the budding adolescent from ghostly enmity. During the elaborate ceremonies of initiation the sexes are kept religiously apart. Again, in Siam, where the ghosts swarm in the atmosphere like gnats, those mischievous beings partake of the first fruits of virginity, and inflict the monthly wound.

T. F. PALMER.

Was Jesus Christ a Buddhist?

SOME authorities believe that Jesus was a semi-mythical personage like Hermes, Dionysius, Horus, Krishna, etc. Others believe that an individual called Jesus did actually exist about the beginning of the Christian era, founding their belief particularly upon a passage in the works of Josephus, which without doubt is an interpolation, and upon this Jesus are the legends of Christianity founded. There are several coincidences between Buddhism and Christianity, one of the most remarkable being the story related in Matthew xix. 16-22, and in Mark x. 17-22, which relates that a certain wealthy person comes to Jesus and says, "What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life," Jesus answers, "Thou knowest the commandments, do not commit adultery, do not kill, do not steal, do not bear false witness, defraud not, honour thy father and mother." It must be observed here that four of the commandments mentioned by Jesus coincide with the first four of the ten commandments given by Buddha to his followers, viz., abstinence from destroying life, abstinence from taking what is not given, abstinence from unchastity, and abstinence from falsehood. Jesus omits all mention of the other five commandments observed by the Jews, particularly the first four, which were considered by them of great importance, relating to worship and sabbath-day observance, neither does he mention any of the rites and ceremonies incumbent upon the Jews. The young man answers, "All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?" We now come to the most remarkable part of the conversation. Jesus said to him, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come and follow me." In other words, he must become a homeless, penniless mendicant, precisely what Buddha enjoined upon his disciples about *five hundred years before*. Gotama Buddha, the son of King Suddhodana and his Queen Maya, was born at Kapilanstha, on the borders of Nepal, about 567 b.c., and died peacefully eighty years afterwards at Kusiniara in Onde. The similarity between the instructions given by Jesus Christ and those given by Buddha, is too remarkable to be passed over as a mere coincidence, and points clearly to there having been some intimate connexion between the two. A Buddhist priest must also become a homeless, penniless, mendicant, if he desires to reach the state of Nirvana, and he dare not possess anything but a simple robe to cover his nakedness, and a bowl to put the food into for which he has to beg. Any traveller in Ceylon, Burma, and Siam can testify that the Buddhist priests in these countries carry out the instructions given to them by Buddha to the very letter.

According to Luke ii. 42, Jesus makes his first public appearance when he was twelve years old, and we hear no more about him, till, according to Luke iii. 23, he began to be about thirty years of age, when he makes his next public appearance. Where was he all these eighteen years? and what was he doing all that time, and why did he not begin his ministry when he came of age, instead of waiting till he was thirty years of age.

About that period a considerable trade was done between the Mediterranean Ports and the Island of Ceylon in pearls, various gems, ivory, spices, and other tropical products. The young Jew, Jesus, it is not at all improbable, may have joined one of the trading expeditions to that country, and landing in Ceylon, proceeded to the great city of Anuradhapura, then in all its magnificence and glory, and one of the principal seats of the Buddhist religion. Anuradhapura, according to an account written by an unknown native hand, which is mentioned in Mrs. R. H. Lock's most interesting book *How to See Ceylon*, covered an area of about 256 square miles, and was refulgent from the numerous temples and palaces whose golden pinnacles glittered in the sky. Some of the streets contained 11,000 houses. One of the most stupendous pieces of architecture was the brazen palace or monastery. It was nine stories high, had a roof of brazen tiles, contained 1,000 rooms, and was supported by a forrest of stone pillars, 1,600 of which are still standing.

Jesus would naturally be amazed at what he saw, and in all probability, captivated by the simplicity and beauty of the Buddhist religion become a convert and join the brotherhood. Some years afterwards he returns to his native land as a Buddhist missionary and endeavours to convert his countrymen to Buddhism. He meets with considerable success among the lower classes, which arouses the envy and alarm of the priesthood. They have him arrested and brought before the Roman Governor on a false charge of high treason, who condemn him to death and have him executed. Some considerable time after his death, absurd stories of his doings, etc., are circulated among his ignorant followers and they end by deifying him. Jewish and Pagan rites and ceremonies are tacked on to the simple religion Jesus taught, the God-eating sacrament among them, till it was almost unrecognizable, and became the utterly absurd conglomeration of nonsense eventually, which masquerades under the false name of Christianity. The story related in Matthew and Mark leaves no doubt whatever that the legendary Jesus believed in and taught the same doctrine as Gotama Buddha did *five hundred years previously*.

ALEX S. GUTHRIE.

Magellan, the Fanatic who Failed.

FERDINAND MAGELLAN was a naturalized Spaniard, who left Portugal because he was ill-treated by the King, and who was the first explorer to enter the Pacific Ocean and to give it that name.

His story has been told several times, but never better than the recently published life by Mr. E. F. Benson. The book is an addition to Messrs. John Lane's Golden Hind Series, published at 12s. 6d., and as a Freethinker I read it with increasing interest, and laid the book down with the wish that it had been longer.

I could see that I should enjoy myself very early on in the story, for Mr. Benson tells us that when Magellan went from Portugal to Spain to try to get support for his expedition, he received support from the most Noble Bishop Fonseca of Burgos.

Now Bishop Fonseca had been the leading churchman to ridicule the ideas of Columbus, and he was still smarting under the sense of his mistake, for riches were pouring into the coffers of Spain as a result of the "fantastic dream of the Italian Columbus." The Bishop, therefore, supported the project with all his heart, for he was determined not to be left out of the affair this time.

With very little delay the support of the influential people of Spain was won, and Magellan went ahead with his preparations. As soon as King Manuel of Portugal heard what was on, and that an expedition was about to set off to add possessions to Spain his rage knew no bounds. He did his utmost to get Magellan back into Portugal, and it was also decided to bribe the explorer. At the conference it was also decided that if Magellan would not be bribed he should be assassinated.

"The Bishop of Lamego moved this pious resolution: he was a sensible, practical man, and was presently promoted to the Archbishopric of Lisbon." So writes Mr. Benson.

The expedition started eventually, and arriving at a coastal village of South America just as rain fell after a two month's drought, Magellan was accepted as a heaven-sent benefactor, and the natives promptly embraced Christianity.

This is interesting, for as will be seen later, when it was seen that Christianity offered benefits the natives would become Christians, but would lose their zeal when things went wrong.

The story of Magellan's voyage, of the mutiny in which a priest was the leading light, and of the voyage over uncharted seas, and desertion and disaster is all told admirably by Mr. Benson.

The tragedy came at the end.

Magellan's main object in sailing was to add possessions to Spain, to try to prove that the Spice Islands were in Spanish and not Portuguese seas, and that there was a way into the Pacific round the southern end of America.

Unfortunately for Magellan, he mixed missionary zeal with these other objects and he came to grief. The King of Sebu, in the Phillipines, acknowledged the sovereignty of the King of Spain and became converted to Christianity. Magellan ordered him to burn all his idols which were only useless blocks of wood and stone, and to bow down and worship the Cross. The King could see no difference in these two religions, so he did as he was told. His Queen promptly decided to be baptized when she saw an image of the virgin and the Christ child. Incidentally, Mr. Benson tells us that this image was placed among the pagan idols when the people lapsed into heatherism again.

Magellan seems to have been filled with a burning desire to act as a missionary, but even Mr. Benson confesses that the explorer could see that there was political value in the conversion of the people.

Some of the people would not accept Christianity, so Magellan laid his hands on an invalid and bade him be whole.

The invalid recovered, and so, of course, the ignorant people saw on which side their bread was buttered, and made no more excuses. They flocked to be baptized.

This turned Magellan's head. He decided that Mactan an island where the natives had not come to be baptized, should be Christianized, and with fanatical enthusiasm he set off with a small armed force to convert the natives by the sword.

His idiotic faith in the protecting power of his god proved his undoing. He and his followers were routed, and Magellan was killed. Then his followers went to pieces.

They began to make preparations to depart and the natives marvelled and doubted.

"Already their belief in the might of Spain and of the God whom the Spaniards worshipped had been sorely shaken; He had done nothing for His servants that morning, and now they were afraid to leave their merchandise ashore."

The converted king then planned treachery, and some of the crew were trapped and killed. The rest fled, seeing that the king himself was tearing down the Cross from the market place.

The natives promptly lapsed into their old religion.

Mr. Benson well sums up their attitude when he writes: "Christianity had been to them only a novel kind of idolatry worth trying, since its apostle demonstrated its efficacy, and since, as captain of the Emperor, he recommended it. So they gave the new treatment a trial; it was a prescription that seemed successful. But on the shores of Mactan that prescription had utterly failed, and the old idols had scored a signal success over the new. So they smashed up the symbols of the new quackery and massacred its students."

What a pity that with his great ambition burning within him Magellan should have thrown into "that fierce blaze of religious fanaticism all human wisdom and prudence, and perished on the threshold of accomplishment."

NECHELLS.

Sonnet.

I HAVE no time to worship. I must live:
 The days in which we move are marred with wrong.
 Shall I be craven then and fail to give
 Hard blow for blow, and bitter song for song?
 I know that breath is light and fugitive,
 That Art's eternal and may well prolong
 The shaken echoes beaten from Life's gong
 By hands that seize on MAN'S prerogative.

But what is there to worship if I would?
 The cell and star are both beyond my ken:
 The best I know is human brotherhood,
 The dearest things enslaved and broken men.
 So, if you will, call my hoarse crying wrath
 An act of worship in a newer faith.

JOHN H. HEWITT.

Another Fiction Gone West.

ONE of the most popular show places in Devon, during the summer season, is Buckfast Abbey, whose peal of bells have more than once been broadcasted. This incomplete edifice is situated a mile off the main Exeter-Plymouth road, the new buildings being erected on the foundations of an old religious establishment of Saxon times, by Benedictine monks who arrived there in the eighties of last century.

The process of building has been so slow that a legend has grown up about it. It has come to be generally accepted that the monks, out of determination to build this structure by their own exertions and skill, resolutely decline extraneous assistance except of a technical nature and for raw materials.

This idea has been carefully nurtured so that everyone of the myriads of visitors who arrive—drawn by the rare sight of seeing monks who prefer work to the cure of souls—go away in the firm belief that what they have seen has been the work of the members of this monastic order. It is true that only three or four of these quasi-monks can be seen at work, whilst visitors are free to come and go, but one dismisses any suspicious thoughts that occur by remembering they have been accustomed to work in the dark, ever since they joined the order. It is also true to state that numerous monks, wearing anticipatory smiles, await for groups of visitors to form, then conduct them round the inner building, explaining with parrot-like repetition, in broken English, the details of work, the skill in craftsmanship, and other features, leaving it to be understood that brethren of the order are alone responsible for the work done.

No charge for admission is made, but an offertory box is within range, inside the structure, whilst in the grounds a tea house, and a building whence one can get their wines, honey, herbal remedies, post cards, gew-gaws, etc., bringing grist to the mill.

For years this deception has been going on; only now has the spool been laid through the architect, Mr. Frederick A. Walters, who designed the restored building, and who supervised the work of construction. He declares that skilled craftsmen in stone, wood, and metal, have done the major part of the work; all that the monks have done—and this under supervision—have been the work of building some of the walls during which, naturally, they have acquired a measure of skill; but carvers have been sent down from London; the altars have been made and placed in position by an outside firm; the metal work, lead glazing, stained glass, and other details have been done likewise by experienced craftsmen from the outside world.

So once again the general public has been deceived, if not in fact through a conspiracy of silence by a religious body, and a lie perpetuated, until this exposure rams it down their throats. Even now there will be fools who will want to believe, though they know the story to be untrue.

Eugenics.

MR. GEORGE WHITEHEAD has followed up his work on *Birth Control* with a clear exposition of *Eugenics*.* There is, in the ultimate, no greater question for man to face than the health question, both individually and racially. Sound health is absolutely necessary for the progress of mankind and happiness is almost impossible without it. Doctors and medicine seem to be the price civilization has to pay in its effort to provide the greatest happiness for the greatest number—though it is doubtful whether man would really be able to do without them if he went "back to nature," whatever that means. Will man ever be able to ward off disease? Will he ever be able so to fortify his body, rigidly following immutable laws of health, that all ailments, all maladies will leave him untouched, unscathed? That such an

* *An Outline of Eugenics*: Vol. 1. *The Mending of Mankind*. Vol. 2. *The Truth About Heredity Parenthood and Environment*. Vol. 3. *Habits: The Key to Virile Health*. Lutterworth's, Ltd. 2s. 6d. net each.

ideal is worth working for must be obvious to everybody. Whether it will ever be attained is another matter.

Mr. Whitehead has, however, in these three books put together a mass of facts which, if more widely known, would at least help towards better and sounder health all round. In clear and vigorous language, he expounds splendid precepts, while at the same time showing the fault and failings of the past. It is difficult from such a mass of closely reasoned exposition to pick on any one chapter as an example of the author's thoroughness in dealing with a very wide subject. The titles sufficiently give the reader an idea of Mr. Whitehead's industry and to the volumes the reader should go. Perhaps he will find the third volume the most provocative, especially the chapters dealing with sex and sex abuse. It would not be impossible to challenge some of the author's conclusions—though these are not the pages to do so. But broadly speaking, Mr. Whitehead has made out a good case, and the reader could find few better guides to commence with on Eugenics than these three excellent and well printed volumes.

H. CUTNER.

Society News.

WEST LONDON BRANCH.

IN spite of the cold weather, our meetings in Hyde Park are being carried on. Every week we receive letters of praise and appreciation from all parts of the country. We are in a position to announce that we have booked the minor Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C., for our indoor meetings, and that the first lecture will begin on Sunday, January 5, 1930.

Our first meeting will be addressed by Mr. Chapman Cohen, the Editor of this Journal, and amongst others who have promised to lecture are: Messrs. J. P. Gilmour, Robert Arch, A. D. Howell-Smith, A. Hyatt, etc.

We hope that London Freethinkers will take this opportunity and come and hear their favourite speakers.—B.A.L.E.M.

Obituary.

EDMUND HAMMOND FORD.

ON Thursday, November 14, the remains of Edmund Hammond Ford were cremated at Golders Green Crematorium.

Aged fourteen years and ten months, the son of Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Ford, of Mill Hill, N.W., and a student at the Haberdashers School, death came under most distressing circumstances.

Cycling home from school he encountered a traffic tangle, was thrown under a motor lorry and killed instantaneously.

To the parents and family we offer sincerest sympathy.

Receiving a secular education, Edmund was spared the fears inculcated by religion, and looked upon the Bible as a collection of amusing primitive beliefs.

A Secular Service was conducted at the Crematorium, in the presence of a large gathering of relatives and friends, by R. H. Rosetti.

CHEST DISEASES

"Umckaloabo acts as regards Tuberculosis as a real specific."

Dr. Sechehaye in the "Swiss Medical Review.")

"It appears to me to have a specific destructive influence on the Tubercle Bacilli in the same way that Quinine has upon Malaria."

(Dr. Grun in the King's Bench Division.)

If you are suffering from any disease of the chest or lungs—spasmodic or cariac asthma excluded—ask your doctor about Umckaloabo, or send a post card for particulars of it to Chas. H. Stevens, 204-206, Worple Road, Wimbledon, London, S.W.20, who post same to you **Free of Charge.**

Readers, especially T.Bs., will see in the above few lines more wonderful news than is to be found in many volumes on the same subject.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

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

LONDON.

INDOOR.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (361 Brixton Road, near Gresham Road, S.W.): 7.30, "The Right to Free Motherhood"—Miss Stella Browne.

THE NON-POLITICAL METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (The Orange Tree, Fuston Road, N.W.1): 7.30, Lecture, Rose Witcop—"Religion, Morality and Birth Control."

HAMPSTEAD ETHICAL INSTITUTE (The Studio Theatre, 59 Finchley Road, N.W.8 near Marlborough Road Station): 11.15, Miss Dorothy Matthews, B.A. (Secretary, Home and School Council) "Unconscious Influences in the Life of the Child."

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Oliver Goldsmith School, Peckham Road, S.E.): Free Sunday Lecture, November 24, at 7.0, Miss Helen Hope—"The Outcast Women of London."

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (Conway Hall Red Lion Square, W.C.1): 11.0, Prof. Graham Wallas—"The Social Function of Property."

OUTDOOR.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 12.30, Messrs. Charles Tuson and James Hart; 3.15, Messrs. E. Betts and C. E. Wood; 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.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Clapham Common): 11.30, Mr. J. Hart; Liverpool Street, Camberwell Gate, Friday, 8.0, Mr. L. Ebury.

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

LIVERPOOL (Merseyside) BRANCH N.S.S. (Picton Hall, Liverpool): November 24, Mr. R. H. Rosetti (London), General Secretary, National Secular Society, 7.30—"Where Are the Gods?"

ON FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 29, in the Board Room, Transport Buildings, 41 Islington, Liverpool, at 7.30 p.m., Mr. F. Egerton Stafford (Hon. President, Liverpool (Merseyside) Branch, N.S.S.), will lecture on "Atheism," before a meeting of the Merseyside Branch, Teacher's Labour League. Members of the N.S.S. are invited, and a special invitation is extended to any members who are teachers or ex-teachers.

LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate): Mr. Chapman Cohen (Editor of the *Freethinker* and President of the National Secular Society) will lecture at 6.30, on "Some Implications of Materialism."

THE BIRMINGHAM BRANCH of the N.S.S. will meet every Sunday, commencing November 24, at Stills Cafe, Bristol Street, at 7.0.

Miscellaneous Advertisements.

A MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN (Freethinker) seeks post in a Freethinking Family. Could run a small house or flat, and do plain cooking.—Apply Box No. 99, FREETHINKER, 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

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THE *Freethinker* Endowment Trust was registered on the 25th of August, 1925, its object being to raise a sum of not less than £8,000, which, by investment, would yield sufficient to cover the estimated annual loss incurred in the maintenance of the *Freethinker*. The Trust is controlled and administered by five Trustees, of which number the Editor of the *Freethinker* is one in virtue of his office. By the terms of the Trust Deed the Trustees are prohibited from deriving anything from the Trust in the shape of profit, emoluments, or payment, and in the event of the *Freethinker* at any time, in the opinion of the Trustees, rendering the Fund unnecessary, it may be brought to an end, and the capital sum handed over to the National Secular Society.

The Trustees set themselves the task of raising a minimum sum of £8,000. This was accomplished by the end of December, 1927. At the suggestion of some of the largest subscribers, it has since been resolved to increase the Trust to a round £10,000, and there is every hope of this being done within a reasonably short time.

The Trust may be benefited by donations of cash, or shares already held, or by bequests. All contributions will be acknowledged in the columns of this journal, and may be sent to either the Editor, or to the Secretary of the Trust, Mr. H. Jessop, Hollyshaw, Whitkirk, Nr. Leeds. Any further information concerning the Trust will be supplied on application.

There is no need to say more about the *Freethinker* itself, than that its invaluable service to the Freethought Cause is recognized and acknowledged by all. It is the mouthpiece of militant Freethought in this country, and places its columns, without charge, at the service of the Movement.

The address of the *Freethinker* Endowment Trust is 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

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