

# THE RULE OF THE SABBATARIAT.

The

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

## Views and Opinions.

### The Rule of the Sabbataria.

THE London County Council's appeal against the enforcement of the Sunday Observance Act has been dismissed. It is surprising that the L.C.C. should ever have contested the judgment of the lower court. No individual would have risked his money on the appeal. But the L.C.C. fights with public money, and that is another question. Still it passes comprehension how any body of men, with highly-paid legal advisers at their elbows, could ever have imagined that it might authorize by a mere order the breaking of an Act of Parliament. The law in this case is clear and precise. Ever since 1781, any place of entertainment, or public meeting to which admission is by money is a disorderly house, and is prohibited under heavy penalties. The position is so plain that we have often publicly expressed surprise that so bigoted a body as the Lord's Day Observance Society did not move for the suppression of all sorts of "Sunday shows." The only reason we could find for their not doing so was that their certain legal success would have meant their undoing. Sunday entertainments are to-day too well established to be completely suppressed by any body or anything. And if the courts punished those who supplied them, the result would certainly be either a repeal or a drastic modification of the Sunday Observance Act. Events justified the opinion. The courts have declared Cinemas on Sunday illegal, and the Cinemas are keeping open. And now that the fat is in the fire it may safely be assumed that other towns, in which the magistrates and Councils have not given permission for Cinema proprietors to break the law, will follow suit. There will be more places open than ever. Act or no Act, Sunday Entertainments will go on. The only way to deal with a thoroughly bad law is to ignore it. And what with

those who will simply ignore the Act, and prosecutions such as those initiated at Manchester for the avowed purpose of demonstrating the absurdity of these Sunday Acts, there ought to be an end to Sabbatarian regulations which all over the Continent have made the English Sunday a synonym for stupidity and hypocrisy.

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### Pious Humbug.

The Lord's Day Observance Society is getting to work both inside and outside Parliament to see what it can save from the wreck. And it is working along lines that again induces one to ask whether it is ever possible for Christian propaganda and intellectual straightforwardness to go together? Medical men all over the country have received a printed postcard, stamped, containing the following:—

As a Medical Man I am of opinion that one day rest in seven from work is essential to man's health and physical well being.

All the recipient has to do is to sign and post it to the Society. These will then be recorded as the testimonies of Medical Men to the need for retaining the *Sunday*—which is not the question that was put to them. Such slimy dishonesty would be impossible in public affairs where the question at issue did not involve Christian belief. One medical friend adds the fitting comment, why one day out of seven? Surely two or three would be better!

People are evidently being tackled in batches, for the opinions of music hall entertainers are also being solicited. Thus, from that philosophic genius, Sir Harry Lauder, is published the following:

I am against Sunday theatre shows. I have told my fellow-artists that if we fail to uphold our Sunday men will scorn us, women will weep for us, and the curses of generations to come will be for ever at the stage door. I am a Scot, and I will rather die than disregard God's Word. It would be better for me to go back to the mines—where, at any rate, Sunday is looked upon as God's gift when a man can refresh himself for the next week's labour.

The picture of the women of the country crying, the men scorning, and the path to the stage door blocked with the heaped-up curses of generations, is terrifying in its cumulative horror. And the frenzied disappointment of the miners, if the Sunday Acts are abolished, and who will therefore be deprived of the pleasure of preparing themselves for greater labour during the other six days of the week, is terrible to contemplate. I do not think we need worry about Sir Harry going back to the mines if the Act is repealed. Meanwhile, we may note that the weeping women, the scorning men, and the cursing generation continue to visit the Cinema—presumably in order to know what it is they are to curse, and scorn, and weep over. On the whole Sir Harry had better stick to his music hall programme. And I do wish that he would

not emphasize the fact that he is a Scot. The unwary may conclude that he is typical of all Scots. And I have so very many Scotch friends who are quite civilized.

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#### A Day of Demoralization.

At present the general press is quite on the side of the civilizing of Sunday. Whether, if the noisy and industrious minority—particularly the large Nonconformist advertisers—set to work it will remain so, is yet to be seen. The *Evening Standard*, in a leading article, points out that "the country in general is now opposed to these Sunday restrictions," and heads its article "Fighting for Sunday Freedom." Other papers follow the same line, and point out the beneficial consequences, morally and socially, that have followed the liberalizing of Sunday. The testimony of the police is practically unanimous on this head. Young people have been better behaved in the streets, and there has been a marked decrease in drunkenness. In both these directions a very potent cause of both drunkenness and bad behaviour in public was the Puritan Sunday, than which no other single institution has done so much to demoralize the general public. It has been on the whole one of the vilest things born of the modern religious mind. The demoralizing effects of the Puritan Sunday in England has been commented on by scores of foreign observers. They have marvelled at the legislation and religious conviction that for so long united in restricting popular dissipation on Sunday to the Church and the public house, and which obstinately closed every avenue of healthy physical and mental recreation. The following from J. L. and Barbara Hammond's *The Age of the Chartists*, dealing with the first half of the nineteenth century, might be duplicated over and over again:—

For the mass of the working class there was only one day on which they were free from the discipline of mill and workshop. On that day they were refused recreation for mind or body, music or games, beauty of art or nature. They sought diversions where they could find them. The Yorkshire and Lancashire papers are full of complaints that the youth of the towns spent Sunday gambling in the streets, or in drunkenness and brutal sports, and that the behaviour of the populace was distressing and inconvenient to respectable people. An engineer who had been abroad described the difference in this respect between English and Continental life. He told the Factory Commission that at Mulhausen, where most of the people were Protestant, the workmen went to Church in the morning and spent the rest of the day in the country playing games, whereas in England, a man can do nothing but go to a public house on Sunday, and when there you can do nothing but drink . . . the English people were left to gloom and drink.

A French observer, writing about the same time, said:—

The observance of Sunday in England is rigorously enforced by Church and State. There is only one exception; the dram shops. All shops must be closed, all places of innocent amusement or instruction, such as Botanical Gardens, or Museums, must be rigorously shut, but the folding doors of the gin palaces may be open to any man who pushes his foot against them.

English religionists were not affected by such strictures. They preferred to retort with citations from the reports of Christian travellers in France, who having largely sampled the dissipations provided for their benefit returned home with lurid accounts of the "Continental Sunday," the temptations of which they were convinced our own Christian public would never be able to resist. I think it was an Archbishop

of York who said that he would sooner see England free than sober. Sabbatarians would much rather see England attending Church, drunken and brutalized, than sober and well behaved and not going to Church or Chapel.

\* \* \*

#### The Evil of Religious Legislation.

Of some laws it may truly be said that even though bad now they were at one time good. This cannot be said of the Sunday laws. There was no greater justification for their creation than there is for their continuance. They had no ground in justice, common sense or social utility. They were never more than exhibitions of the narrowest forms of religious bigotry. Their social consequences have always been the same; to shut the mass of the people off from the less harmful or the obviously better forms of recreation and enjoyment, and drive them to lower and more harmful ways of killing time. They made happiness synonymous with sin, and so placed the mark of degradation on the healthier impulses of human nature. During the critical period in which the English people were being driven off the land, and condemned to live in the horrible conditions of the factory-built dens of Lancashire and Yorkshire, these Sunday laws, with the full power of the "Great Religious Revival" behind them, did what they could to plunge the working class of the country into a state of almost hopeless demoralization. Let anyone seriously consider that at least ten generations have been brought up under the influence of these Sunday laws and of the Puritanism from which they proceeded, and they will have some explanation of the persistence of many of the uglier features of English life.

But the Sunday laws open up a still wider issue. One of the daily papers, the *Telegraph*, I think, spoke of the advisability of the removal of these restrictions on freedom of action. Now restrictions are not in themselves bad. Indeed, social liberty is dependent upon restrictions. It is the restrictions placed upon each that makes for the freedom of all. But the restrictions must be placed upon all, and in the interests of the greater freedom of all. The peculiar feature of religious laws, of which Sunday laws are typical, is that they represent the opinions of a section that are being forced upon the rest of the community, and for which no social justification can be offered. Tithe laws, Blasphemy laws, laws which relieve Churches and Chapels from payment of taxes, regulations which keep religious instruction in the schools, the compulsory attendance of soldiers and sailors at religious services, are all examples of the kind of legislation to which the Lord's Day Observance Act belongs. If there is no justification for forbidding certain things on Sunday, merely because the fetish-book of a sect says they shall not be done, there can be no justification for granting the same servants of this fetish book special immunities and privileges, or forcing their opinions upon the rest of the community. The Lord's Day Observance Society acted with shrewdness in not appealing to the courts to suppress Sunday entertainments, and preferring to depend upon locally organized bigotry and business boycott; but it will be the fault of those who take an intelligent interest in genuine social reform if the moral of the situation is not driven home.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

I prefer the hardest terms of peace to the most just war.—C. J. Fox.

The best sort of revenge is not to be like him who did the injury.—Marcus Antoninus.

Every absurdity has a champion to defend it; for error is always talkative.—Goldsmith.

## Concerning Coleridge.

"Once submit a subject to discussion, you can never withdraw it again; you can never again clothe it with mystery, or fence it by consecration; it remains for ever open to free choice, and exposed to profane deliberation."—Walter Bagehot.

"Not one man in a thousand has either strength of mind or goodness of heart to be an Atheist. I repeat it. Not one man in a thousand has goodness of heart or strength of mind to be an Atheist." This is a striking quotation from Samuel Taylor Coleridge's *Table Talk*. It was a man with a big heart and a big head who said that. It loses nothing of its force from the fact that Coleridge was a Christian, although not an ordinary one, for he was a genius. Always he wore his "rue with a difference." Coleridge had read much and thought widely. Some of the best men he knew, such as Charles Lamb, were suspects. His close friend, Wordsworth, was a Pantheist, and the world was ringing with the iconoclastic message of the French Revolution. Coleridge knew that it was not stupidity nor heartlessness that made men doubt the existence of gods, but intellect that would not be lulled by priestly incense, and sympathy that saw and felt the miseries of mankind.

Coleridge was as great a talker as old Dr. Sam Johnson, but he had no Boswell to record all his remarks. His friend, Robert Southey, said that Coleridge's mouth "seems incapable of being at rest." Southey was hard to please, for he had the richest talker in all England in the same house with him, and it only made him peevish. The explanation is that Southey had a commonplace mind, and was the antipodes of Coleridge. In all Southey's shelf-full of books, there is not any spark of genius. Lamb, who was a genius, had a very different impression of Coleridge's talk. Writing of one of the poet's visits, he said: "I am living in a continual feast. Coleridge has been with me now for nigh on three weeks." Nor did Coleridge have it all his own way. "Did you ever hear me preach?" he once asked Lamb. "I never heard you do anything else," was the witty rejoinder.

Even the hypercritical Carlyle praised Coleridge, thus endorsing Lamb's view. "No talk in his century," said the Sage of Chelsea, "or in any other, could be more inspiring." Coleridge did other and finer work than talk across the dinner table. Endowed with an intellect of the first order, and a splendid imagination, Coleridge left enough poetry and criticism to place him in the front rank of authors. This is no disparagement of his conversational ability. Except Selden's *Table Talk*, there is hardly so rich a treasure-house of wisdom in the language as Coleridge's *Table Talk*. It represents the mature talk of a princely intellect at home in the world of books. His friends had better entertainment than food and wine, for there has been few such brilliant talkers as Coleridge. The pages of his book show us how an accomplished man, famous for his conversation, entertained his company a century ago. For, like Lord Mansfield, who, in his youth, "drank champagne with the wits," Coleridge enjoyed the best of good company from first to last.

The contributions which Coleridge made to modern thought, rich, ample, and suggestive as they are, have all the characteristics of his varied and eventful life. In whatever he attempted, he drove the shaft deep, and gave us samples of the wealth of ore lying in its confines. Although he worked these mines only at irregular intervals, and passed from one to the other, yet, by stimulating others, he caused the ground to be explored as it never was before in England. If it cannot be said that he left a complete system, yet it

can be said, and it is a noble tribute, that he made it possible for others to grasp the principles underlying all systems. His contribution to the literature of power is almost unsurpassed by any modern writer. So fastidious a writer as Matthew Arnold has pointed this out:—

That which will stand of Coleridge is this, the stimulus of his continual instinctive effort to get at and to lay bare the real truth of the matter in hand, whether that matter were literary or philosophical, or political or religious; and this in a country where at the moment such an effort was almost unknown.

Yet, great as Coleridge's genius was, he suffered from laxity of fibre. He wrote a lot, and the notes he made would have been a task for most men. But he was incapable of continued and concentrated labour. Intellect he had; the frenzy of the poet was in his eyes; but he was indolent. The result was he illuminated the world, not with a steady light like Shakespeare, but in meteoric flashes, which, in Milton's expressive phrase, "made darkness visible."

The living Coleridge was ever his own apology. Men and women who neither shared nor ignored his shortcomings not only loved him, but honoured him. He must have had a rich nature to have gathered about him such choice friends as Wordsworth, Scott, Lamb, De Quincey, Byron, Hazlitt, and Stirling. Yet how forlorn the end! For more than thirty years he was the slave of opium. It broke up his home; it alienated his wife; it ruined his health; it made him wretched. Back of all this he was the slave of irresolution and the enervating dejection of Hamlet, which kept him for ever at war with himself, at last cast him out upon the homeless ocean of despair. A brief dawn of unsurpassed promise and achievement; a trouble as of clouds and weeping rain; then a long summer evening's work done by the setting sun's pathetic light; such was Coleridge's day, the afterglow of which is still in the sky.

MIMNERMUS.

## Majestic Francis Bacon.

ENGLAND has been the birthplace of innumerable natural philosophers of the first rank. One of the most brilliant of these is the great thinker Francis Bacon. A man of restless intellect, marvellous versatility, boundless ambition, who was regretfully prone to place personal advantage before principle in worldly affairs, he nevertheless remains one of the leading lights of his own, or any other age.

The son of Sir Nicholas Bacon, Lord-Keeper of the Great Seal of England during the reign of Elizabeth, Francis was born in cultured surroundings in 1561 and died in 1626. He entered Trinity College, Cambridge at an early age, and enjoyed every educational advantage those spacious times afforded. He was still quite young when his father died, and he inherited very little property.

While at Cambridge, the thoughtful youth detected the emptiness of the scholastic system, and became keenly alive to the necessity for educational reform. And he soon persuaded himself that he was powerful enough to introduce original methods into scientific studies, which should enlarge human knowledge of the universe far exceeding any limits thus far attained.

Trained in the law, Bacon soon sought advancement at the hands of Burghley, only to meet rebuff. He then endeavoured to win the ear of the Queen when, a briefless barrister, aged twenty-three, he presented to the testy Elizabeth a document in which he recommended more considerate treatment for re-

cusants. A few years later, in 1589, he composed a very able pamphlet on the disputations that raged within the Anglican Church, in which he suggested more tolerance in matters of discipline and doctrine. These overtures were disregarded, and his prospects darkened when he displeased the Crown by opposing a subsidy from his place in Parliament in 1593. Despite his splendid ability, his public career proved a series of disappointments. And, when in later days, under James I, his unique gifts were recognized, and he ultimately found himself on the Woolsack, his enemies accused him of bribery and corruption, charges from which he was unable to vindicate himself. He was ignominiously dismissed, and heavily fined for his malpractices. His concluding years were passed in retirement and study. In March, 1626, he contracted a fatal chill while engaged in stuffing a fowl with snow, so that he might determine the effect of cold in preserving flesh. His grave is at St. Michael's Church, St. Albans. Always more or less in need of money, Bacon loved pomp and ceremony during life, and died deeply immersed in debt.

The complete reform of the then reigning science and philosophy, projected in Bacon's busy brain, was to embrace all human knowledge and understanding within its province. This monumental work was to appear with the title of *Instauratio Magna*. But, in company with Buckle's *Civilisation*, Bacon's works are a mere fragment of what he aspired to pen. His varied excursions into other fields left him insufficient leisure to accomplish his ambition. And if, as some strange people contend, his spare time was partly devoted to the writings of Shakespeare's poems and plays, the wonder remains that he achieved so much.

Bacon's *Advancement of Learning*, and *The New Method*, suffice to make his fame immortal. The title of this latter work was deliberately chosen as a direct challenge to the supremacy of Aristotle. The Greek sage's *Organum* was to recede, when confronted by the Englishman's *Novum Organum*. In a series of aphorisms, Bacon relentlessly exposes the futilities of traditional scholasticism, while expounding the new system of philosophy. The fallacies into which the uncritical acceptance of Aristotle, as interpreted by the schoolmen, had betrayed mankind are pelted with pitiless scorn.

Various phantoms had been set up for worship. Bacon ridicules these as the idols of the tribe, the cave, the market-place and the theatre. The tribal idolatries are those that impel men to read into Nature their own preconceptions. Idols of the cave comprise the errors incidental to our personal prejudices. The idols of the market-place are the influences of empty words and phrases upon our thoughts; while the idols of the theatre represent the potency of custom and tradition. The inherited scheme of philosophy is usually received without question by the thoughtless multitude. The fact that some form of belief is established serves to make it true.

Very acutely Bacon criticizes the common tendency to regard natural phenomena from a merely human standpoint. Natural forces are extremely complex, and the inquirer must not ascribe to them the ideal conditions he desires in his own life. He dismisses the assumption that the paths followed by the celestial orbs are necessarily circular. Preconceptions possess no scientific validity, and all real knowledge of Nature is obtained by observation and experiment. Man harnesses and controls the forces of Nature by obeying her laws. Every experiment is a question addressed to the phenomenal world.

Bacon made several shrewd scientific forecasts. He anticipated the theory of heat as a mode of motion, and he noted that light needs time for transmission. Yet, he remained poorly acquainted with various

current developments in natural inquiry. He rejected the truth of the Copernican astronomy, and it is noteworthy that while important inductive research was proceeding in the home of Dr. Gilbert—the great electrical pioneer—and Bacon was one of Gilbert's patients, he never appears to have attended the gatherings of scientists on these occasions. Again, he never mentions Harvey's discovery of the circulation of the blood, although the great physician began to teach the new doctrine in 1619, the year preceding the publication of Bacon's *Novum Organum*. Napier's logarithms escaped his knowledge, and he was apparently unaware of Kepler's calculations. But in justice to Bacon, it should be remembered that the celebrated astronomer Tycho Brahe and other scientists of the period declined to accept the heliocentric views of Copernicus.

Bacon, like his illustrious successors, Hobbes, Locke, and Hume assumed for all practical purposes the self-evident distinctions of mind and matter. He was obviously an empiricist and realist, while his religion appears to have been that of all sensible men. As he himself asserted: "Truth is rightly called the daughter of time, not of authority."

As Sir Sidney Lee says: "His greatness consists in his repeated insistence on the facts that man is the servant and interpreter of Nature, that truth is not derived from authority, and that knowledge is the fruit of experience. The impetus which his inductive methods gave to future scientific investigation is indisputable. As he himself described it, he 'rang the bell which called the other wits together.' He was the practical creator of scientific induction, and although succeeding scientific experimentalists may have been unconscious of their indebtedness to him, their chief results are due to their adoption of his logical method." And it is interesting to note that in his *New Atlantis*, the philosopher recommends the institution of scientific academies, and to this suggestion the creation of the Royal Society has been attributed.

Bacon's New Instrument or Method, his *Novum Organum* was designed to prove "the science of a better and more perfect use of reason in the investigation of things, and of the true aids of the understanding." But it was the mere beginning of a giant achievement. As Bacon states: "The fortune of the human race will give the issue; such an issue, it may be, as in the present condition of things and of the minds of men cannot easily be seen or imagined. For the object in view is not only the contemplative happiness, but the whole fortunes and affairs, and powers, and works of men." Although Bacon confined himself in great measure to the study of external existence, it is a fair inference that he anticipated the coming extension of his method to the phenomena of psychology, ethics, and sociology. Doubtless, Bacon would have regarded, had he lived in the days of Darwin and Spencer, a biological basis as essential to any clear conception of mind and society. As Macaulay rightly said: "Bacon moved the intellects that have moved the world."

As a poet, Bacon was a miserable failure, while his prose proclaims its greatness in adding so many phrases to the mother tongue. As a philosopher and man of letters he stands among the greatest. His character was such as more frequently repels than attracts. Hence his incompetence as a manager of men. He, a man of inordinate ambition and extravagant tastes, suffered from the eternal lack of pence which vexes public men. His comparative poverty largely explains his ethical frailties. Perhaps, Pope, in his *Essay on Man*, best expresses the truth:—

"If parts allure thee, think how Bacon shined;  
The wisest, brightest, meanest of mankind."

[T. F. PALMER.]

## Laplace and Determinism.

THE New light which has in recent years been thrown on the Laplacian hypothesis has been taken in support of the cry which is even now very popular in some quarters that Determinism is done for. Such, however, is not the view held by those very scientists who are contending for Indeterminacy—Eddington and Jeans.

What, then, has happened to the theory which was guessed at by Bruno, formulated by Laplace, and developed by Herschel? It is not the minor alterations which it has undergone that are important. What has taken place has been, not so much a revision of the actual hypothesis, but of the use made of it.

Laplace conceived a hot, gaseous cloud, a fire-mist, which, when it had reached the stage of rotation, following cooling and contraction, gave off "rings" of spiral nebulae which broke up and then gathered into planets. This was supposed to account for the origin of the solar system. Now it is believed that a passing star made our sun heave off knotted spiral nebulae which became collecting-centres. Eddington says, "A star almost collided with the sun, and raised a great tidal wave, causing jets of matter to spurt out of the sun, now condensed as the planets." (*Science and the Unseen World.*)

Is the Laplacian theory of no use, then? Suppose we take the scientists' word for it, that it does not account for the origin of the solar system; there is still the Stellar System. The solar System—any solar system—is quite insignificant in size when compared with the stellar system. And it is in our conception of the stellar system that Laplace is still of service.

For this we need go no further than Jeans. He abandons the Laplacian hypothesis for the solar system and says, "Apart from minor details the process imagined by Laplace explains the birth of suns [*i.e.*, stars] out of nebula; it cannot explain the birth of planets out of suns." (*The Universe Around Us*). So that the dimly coloured, misty nebula still "remains true for a starting-point." (*Outline of Science*; edited by Prof. Thomson); there are in fact hundreds of thousands of them now existent.

Laplace, so far from claiming infallibility for every detail of his scheme, said, "I distrust my hypothesis." His was a fight, not for this or that special mode of nebular evolution, but for a principle—the principle of Determinism, as opposed to Newton's idea of a God who was a skilled geometrician, and who was hypothetically empowered to interfere with his handiwork.

As the condition of scientific thought Determinism is indispensable, inescapable. It is not broken because the solar system originated in a way other than that conceived by a French nobleman of the eighteenth century.

We therefore conclude:—

(1) The Laplacian hypothesis, developed, serves for the origin of the stellar system. It is deterministic.

(2) It does not account for the origin of solar systems, and its place is taken by another determinate—the effect of passing stars.

G. H. TAYLOR.

Resolve and thou art free.—*Longfellow.*

Do the duty which lies nearest to thee.—*Goethe.*

There is a period of life when we go back as we advance.—*Rousseau.*

## The Nationalization of God.

MAN made God in his own image. And as the human race multiplied and replenished the earth; and became divided into tribes and clans—and ultimately nations—difficulties arose as to the universal adoption of one particular god as a general rule. So there arose rival gods; and some nations even had a plurality of deities to take charge of different departments of life; or to meet the varying conceptions of God which occurred in the empires with the biggest populations. As civilization advanced there was inevitably a greater, gradually developing, variety and variegation in the thoughts and ideas of mankind, with the result that as knowledge grew, for example among the Greeks and Romans, there arose here and there bold individualistic minds who argued for the naturalistic in place of a supernaturalistic concept of the Universe. Thus was the battle first joined between the Priesthoods and the Freethinkers. And as a consequence the supernaturalists incorporated themselves in ecclesiastical systems to suppress the heretics and prevent the spread of their teachings.

Of old, just as the present time, the chief instruments employed by the ruling classes in association with their priesthoods to retain their immorally secured monopolies; to keep the masses in subjection; and to prevent such a horrible catastrophe as, say, the nationalization of the land are the fictions of supernatural tyranny, supernatural terrorism and supernatural torture. The form and method of their application may vary; but the instruments themselves remain in essence the same.

Christians have set themselves the formidable task of making an international god; and their efforts are not without humour. For example, we well know that in class books used by British Missionaries in India, Jesus Christ is pictured as Eton-cropped and as wearing the conventional British frock-suit and silk hat; whereas for us Britishers as youngsters, he was represented as wearing long hair, long flowing robes and sandals. These pictorial attempts to fuse East and West are to say the least amusing.

An old English lady of the Victorian Era always thought of God as a dignified Duke with perfectly sublimated manners. How far is this idea removed from the Old Testament conception which the religious artists of our tender years impressed upon our minds—namely, that of the fat old oriental patriarch with a beard to his waist! Mr. G. K. Chesterton, in a recent number of his journal *G.K.'s Weekly*, gave a cartoon by Will Dyson, evidently intended to exhibit a strain of snobbishness in Dean Inge. God is represented (in the Old Testament style) as standing in converse with the Dean, who is garbed in clerical dress, wearing a topper and with a big book under his arm. Says God, "Ah well, my dear Dean, you see my son was only a carpenter."

Despite the attempts to make an international God, the concepts of the faithful must be coloured or fixed by their own nationality, its peculiar conditions and their environment. To a British Christian, God thinks and speaks in the English language and with a due regard for British institutions. The same applies to German believers; Italian believers; French believers. Once you internationalize God you denationalize him, and make him such an attenuated and nebulous thing that he is really nothing more, and of no more value or influence, than a spiritualistic photograph. As human knowledge grows, the tendency is towards a greater and greater variegation in even individual conceptions of God. No wonder that there is so much bewilderment among the children of men occasioned

by the conflicting versions which the various supernatural confidence tricksters exhibit to the public.

And on the top of them all, we now have the American negroes broadcasting *their* God in the similitude of a negro Baptist pastor wearing a long black coat, wide-brimmed soft black hat, turn down white collar and old-fashioned black bow tie. *Green Pastures* is a play showing the negro heaven, and there is an interesting discussion between God and Gabriel as to the existing state of things on earth. They both appear to deplore this. Gabriel regarding humanity as a "wash out," suggests to God that he should wash it out again and start afresh. The British censor has forbidden the performance of the play here, much to the disappointment of several of our religious press paragraphists, who regard it as a simply touching and beautiful exhibition. Without necessarily approving the Censor's ban, we may point out how primeval and limited is the negro notion—though not more so than of many of our ignorant and uninstructed people here. The effect is to compress in feeble minds the boundless Universe into our little world. The more we belittle and cramp—the further do we postpone the emancipation of humanity.

God in so far as he, she, or it is believed in, has been nationally and sometimes individually stereotyped. The Divines of a hundred years since regarded God as being without variableness or even shadow of turning—unchangeable—the same yesterday, to-day and for ever. It is only an ignorant minority that so regards him, her, or it now.

It is in great crises that actual, naked conceptions emerge. When the Great War broke out, an American journal collected descriptions of God by the various belligerents as follow:—

- God of our Fatherland—Nicholas.
- God of our dear Fatherland—Wilhelm.
- God of all French—Poincaré.
- God our Defence and Bulwark—Franz Josef.
- God of our Race—George.
- God our Right Arm—Albert.
- We can take care of ourselves—Serbia.

What troubles the Priests is that humanity may adopt Serbia's God! IGNORUS.

## The Book Shop.

THERE should be many readers to give William Hazlitt a genuine welcome in the admirable form presented by the Nonesuch Press. *Selected Essays, 1778: 1830, 8s. 6d.* A wide choice of Hazlitt's writings has been made, and many new essays make their appearance among the immortal old. At heart, most men hate shams, abhor fine words that butter no parsnips, and are partial to any author who can say precisely what they have imperfectly thought. The unpublished, but known opinions of some great men would come like a thunderbolt to those who are content to skate on surfaces, and at the back of Hazlitt's sledge-hammer common sense there must have been the strength of twenty good writers—all compressed to the severe discipline of the effective printed word. In 1828 *A Farewell to Essay-Writing*, we find the hater of tyrants briefly cataloguing his requirements from a magnificent world: "Food, warmth, and a book—these are all I at present ask—the *ultima Thule* of my wandering desires." Commenting on an institution that in the present dare not repeal the Blasphemy Laws he wrote: "The greatest test of courage I can conceive is to speak truth in the House of Commons." Another test quite as great, is of course, to speak truth outside the place; in fact, the *desire* for truth speaking seems to be dying of a sheer surfeit of sympathy. In the press, in the pulpit, in Parliament, there is scarcely enough interest in the matters dealt with—and the manner too—to offer any

serious competition to wireless or Jazz dancing. For this reason, readers will agree with Mr. Geoffrey Keyne's remarks in the Introduction: "His writing appeals to no special coterie or period, but is of permanent value to mankind in general." Hazlitt was not a leafer: he liked the country and solitude, although he had many friends; his thoughts bespeak independence of judgment, he had a natural and easy way of presenting them, and he is a good model for speaking or writing. In *Advice to a Schoolboy*, Hazlitt makes a confession in praise of books: "If my life had been more full of calamity than it has been (much more than I hope yours will be) I would live it over again, my poor little boy, to have read the books I did in my youth." There is good value in the book before us, it is well bound, nicely printed, and its intellectual substance will stand the wear and tear of time when others are descended from the bookshelves and sent packing.

There are many paths, roads high and low, easy and difficult, that may be trodden by the willing feet of those who find, or hope to find, what they want in books. The points and peaks in literature are almost as innumerable as the stars—the choice is extensive, and it resolves itself into a question of assimilation or rejection. Myriads of books are being sprinkled on the earth from that giant water-can the modern printing press, and one hopes that the flowers of intellect will not be swamped. On the advice of a friend, whose opinions I value, I bought a copy of *The Conquest of Illusion*, by J. J. Van Der Leeuw, L.L.D., published by Alfred A. Knopf, price 10s. 6d., 1928. I like it immensely—to use a current phrase, and the author's thesis is not one to make a reader wish that he had spent his time in playing ludo, or snakes and ladders instead of bending his mind to the subject set down in book form. On some occasions—so I am told, slow motion pictures are shown at cinemas. This is to enable the spectator to follow in detail the various phases of an accident or an action. In this way I read the *Conquest of Illusion*, and, in my opinion, it is a book worthy of the name, a credit to the author, and, like a good deed, it shines in a naughty world. It effectively answers Goethe's question, "What can you teach me?" by providing a thorough analytical examination of big questions in philosophy, and the style never becomes obscure or turgid. In a chapter on the "Immortality of the Soul," Dr. Van Der Leeuw touches familiar ground to Freethinkers. He writes: "It cannot be denied that there is more true nobility in many a convinced materialist, who, never doubting his entire cessation at the death of the body, yet lives an unselfish, self-sacrificing life, than there is in the devout believer whose morality needs the fears of hell and the promise of heaven." There is a special kind of pleasure in finding this in print outside the pages of the *Freethinker*; the subject has always been a problem to the minds of many great public men that are in the aboriginal stage of thinking. Further on, we find the author paying a tribute to Charles Bradlaugh, whom he praises for saying that it was enough for the great orator if his life served but as a bridge across which humanity could march onwards to a better and happier future. I have only given a slight indication of the contents of the *Conquest of Illusion*; the author writes easily and freely, taking in his stride such names as Plotinus, Shelley, and Lao Tze. Curiously enough, he also uses for his purpose in the chapter, "From the Unreal to the Real," the same extract from Plato's Republic as that prefacing the *Mysterious Universe*, by Sir James Jeans, but with different conclusions. The *Conquest of Illusion* is not a big book, it is really helpful towards sorting out what are problems and what are not, and the author's attitude towards them is healthy, vigorous, upright, and devoid of sentimentality. It is Dionysian in spirit, in line, in a degree with Nietzsche's philosophy, and as a taste of its quality in compression of truth, here is Freethought in a sentence: "It is a great but terrible thing when doubt is born, terrible in that it destroys the old world, great in that it opens the way to a new and nobler one." I shall, with the Editor's permission, return to this book which is a genuine contribution to the world's knowledge, notable for its clarity, and differing from many others which may in their effect, be described in an illustration as follows. There are a number of people in

a dark room, and each one is holding a lighted candle to find out as much about the room as possible. A stranger enters, blows one of the candles out, and commences a discussion with the individuals as to the *best known methods of lighting candles*.

I have been taking a busman's holiday in reading the reviews of Mr. Stephen MacKenna's translation of Plotinus in five volumes. None of these notices give the slightest idea of the position of Plotinus in the world of thought, the books are expensive, and they do not appear to have been published for the currency of thought—that is, for the work-a-day world of every-day life. In other words, Plotinus is wrapped in the lavender of luxury, and if you like a joke, you will remember that Dean Inge is considered an authority on Plotinus, who was as sympathetic towards Christianity as fire is to water. Thumbing my notes on him again of 1922, I find the following underlinings in his chapter "Against the Gnostics":—

"To attempt, however, to pass beyond intellect, is to fall from intellect." The Gnostics were a Christian sect, and Plotinus, a student and commentator on Plato, would not agree with them in their teachings of the vileness of the body, the arrogance of their opinions concerning the soul, and their assumption of importance in the universe. Plotinus was an Egyptian, and was a native of Lycopolis (203-262 A.D.). His disciple was Porphyry, whose most important work was a violent attack on Christian doctrines of which, however, only a few fragments remain. Plotinus, his master, was not an Atheist, but his hypothesis that God was a spirit, and all the attributes of him were goodness and unity, lead him into no wild extravagance. He was gentle and mild, easily accessible to his friends, lived a good and noble life in Rome for ten years teaching philosophy, and many at death entrusted their children and property to him in the capacity of guardian. There is, in his works, much that is not clear, but, as a compensation, the beautiful truths that can be apprehended make him worth an intellectual struggle. *The Select Works of Plotinus*, of which I have a copy, can be purchased in the Bohn's Popular Library, G. Bell & Sons, Ltd., 1914, for about two shillings. Miss Evelyn Underhill, in an advertisement of the five volumes mentioned above, burbles in words of four and five syllables. This, we take it, is the puff ponderous, solemn, profound, obsecurantist. It gives none of the simple facts I have extracted, and such high falutin' twaddle should be quietly kicked to the rear, and the reader should go to the Bohn volume, translated by Thomas Taylor, and dedicated to George Meredith. He will be well rewarded for his pains, and will be able to see the connexion between Plotinus and the *Conquest of Illusion*.

C. DE-B.

## Acid Drops.

Our prize for the Week's Great Thought must this week go to the Bishop of Ripon. In the *Christian World* for January 29, he is reported as saying, "We have got to make men see that the answer to all great questions depends upon the nature of God." Now that is very helpful; for as no one knows what the nature of God is, or even whether there is a God about whose nature we might know, it follows that the answer to all great questions depends upon something of which we know nothing, and about which we cannot know anything. It also follows that the proper thing to do would be to stop puzzling over all other questions until we have settled what is the nature of something of which we know nothing. Religion is such a help!

The agitation against the use of the B.B.C. as an organization for the defence of Christianity, as well as against its Sunday programme, continues, and we strongly advise all licence holders who are out for fair play to keep the game going. They should regularly protest both to the B.B.C.—which in this case means that prize bigot Sir John Keith and his Committee of

parsons—and should also write to their local papers. Most editors have by now awakened to the fact that the feeling against the Sunday plan is too wide-spread, and scores of letters appear as a result. So by all means keep the game going.

Want of space prevented our dealing with this matter last week, which explains why we are only now commenting on two or three incidents worth recording. First comes the impudent protest of the Roman Catholic Cardinal MacRory, who protests that:—

It is a very serious thing for any country maintaining a State religion that is avowedly Christian to permit an institution like the B.B.C., which is almost a national institution to be the vehicle of anti-Christian propaganda.

This protest was raised, not against any direct, straightforward propaganda. That has never yet been permitted by the B.B.C., and is not likely to be until *all* non-Christians make their protest publicly and repeatedly. We suggest that the way might be led by men like H. G. Wells, Sir Arthur Keith, Bernard Shaw, Julian Huxley, and others of similar standing. We should then see what would happen. The B.B.C. is at present excusing its open advocacy of Christianity, and hiding the fact that it is not allowing anything in the shape of a plain reply, by permitting scientific talks which simply leave religion alone.

To this attack the B.B.C. replies, first of all, that "broadcasting has performed a good service to the cause of religion in this country," and second, that "So far as we are aware, we do not know of any anti-Christian who has contributed to any symposium of talks on religion which has been broadcast by the B.B.C." We should like our readers to take particular notice of this reference. It is really a plea of "guilty" to the charge of religious partisanship on the part of the B.B.C. It must also be remembered that before anything is broadcast by the B.B.C. a copy of what is read must be submitted to the Committee.

The second form of defence is to cite from the speeches made by certain bishops in the Upper House of Convocation, when considering the effects of broadcasting on religion. The Bishop of Birmingham said that the B.B.C. had acted well in "allowing men of distinction to speak on matters to which they had given special thought." The Bishop conveniently forgot that never yet has the B.B.C. permitted the anti-Christian case to be put by anyone. The report was generally pleased with the way the B.B.C. had managed the religious part of the business as it well might be. But the Bishop of Ely really made us sit up in admiration. In reply to the complaint that people might listen to Church service being broadcast while playing a game of cards, or smoking a pipe, or leaning back in an arm-chair, said there was no evidence that this kind of thing occurred. On the contrary, when the religious service is being broadcast:—

People do put their pipes down; they do sit up, and do attend and behave reverently.

If we may be permitted to quote one of the epigrams from Mr. Cohen's *Opinions*:—

Ananias belonged to the first group of Christians. It is tolerably certain that his descendants will be among the last.

We do not know how the Bishop of Ely is aware that people behave in the manner described—but it not for us to cast doubt on the Bishop's veracity. Besides, the picture of thousands of listeners on Sunday—who cannot reach a Continental station—solemnly laying down their pipes and cigarettes, ceasing to play games, or loll back in an armchair, and standing to attention during the religious service is so impressive, that even a hardened heretic like ourselves feel impressed to silence. We humbly offer our congratulations to the Bishop of Ely. He will never better this even if he lives to a hundred.

By what was presumably an oversight, the following letter, signed "Equity," was allowed to appear in *Radio Times* (January 30):—

SUNDAY PROGRAMMES.

Your correspondent, Mr. E. W. Adams, of Surbiton, in putting the case for the defence on the question of Sunday Programmes, does not advance the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. We plaintiffs do not wish for the complete secularization of Sunday programmes, nor do we imagine that a slight concession on the part of the B.B.C. would entail such a complete reversal of policy. Our desire is that the B.B.C. should bring itself into line with the facts of modern life. The Sunday programmes should contain the best fare of whatever kind broadcast. Moreover, we find offence in the veiled inference that those who do not wish to hear Religious Services are in any way less entitled to consideration than those who do. This condition does not hold good in the ordinary life of the community, and to use it in broadcasting savours of hypocrisy.

Given the opportunity the Christian parson is everywhere the same—that is, he is a public nuisance so far as his circumstances will permit him to be such. We have one sample of this in the matter of the right use of Sunday. The following from *South African Review*, may be taken as proof:—

It is the policy of the churches in South Africa to crush, as far as possible, all forms of recreation and amusement for the people, both on Sundays and week-days. To these narrow-minded kill-joys misery means sanctity, happiness is sin. This is more apparent in the dorps than in the big towns of the Union, and in some cases the church places a ban upon dancing, tennis, cinemas, and plays even on week-days. From the storm of indignation which this latest impudent piece of tyranny has aroused it is evident that the parsons have at last over-stepped themselves.

As education spreads in South Africa, so will the power of the parson decrease, and he will be relegated to his rightful sphere in the order of things. That sphere will be a lonely one, and his mock humility of to-day will give place to the shame-faced cringing of the man who has been found out. At present the churches are run as a trading concern, with but little religion in them beyond that which is brought by the congregations. It is the fear that their takings in God, Ltd., will decrease if they have a rival in the field which has prompted these canting parsons to protest against the sacred cause of charity.

Only a sense of the ridiculous can make this attitude of God, Ltd., tolerable to the thinking man and woman. While yet representing the impecunious and often footsore Man of Sorrows, these twentieth century disciples live in luxury and travel in the comfort of motors to spare their blisters. They are backed by the wealthiest combine that ever exploited honest piety, yet they would deny their betters a helping hand in their hour of need. Now what is the use of God Almighty calling these parsons to their task if ordinary secular papers and persons are permitted to talk about them in this ribald manner? If a pestilence breaks out in South Africa we shall not find it difficult to explain why it has occurred.

They put some real "pep" into the religious life in U.S.A. The *Evening Standard* of January 24 reports how it is done. There is a "Church Militant" in Los Angeles, established to prove that Christians of every colour and class can live together in a genuinely Christian way. And they do it. When the white section pray, the coloured section, which does not care for its form of prayer, objects. On the other hand when the black section tells the Lord in hymns what it thinks, the white section objects. This feeling manifests itself by each section shying hymn books and Bibles at the other one. Tired of this, or because the ammunition gave out, one side now prays while the other side sings hymns, each trying to drown the other. The negro leader says they will fight it out on these lines all winter. The white leader says, "We have only just begun to pray and fight." Meanwhile the police stand by. Now that is something like a religious revival, and if it can only be done in London, we can promise any church that will try it, crowded houses with a continuous perform-

ance from 2 till 11. Consider the attraction of, say, Dean Inge and the Bishop of London clucking hymn books at each other to punctuate their differences, while the followers of each sing and pray continuously! There would be no more talk of scanty congregations.

Gipsy Smith, after saving the world several times over, has now set out to save the youth of London. He says young men have not got religion, in fact, "A whole generation has backslidden into the horrible pit of pre-war paganism," and Gipsy Smith intends to drag them out again. Of course, he has done this several times before, but he is going to do it again, and whenever his campaign closes there will be the usual yarns—probably prepared before it starts, of the multitudes that have been brought to the foot of the Cross, etc., etc. It is really a testimony to the impregnability of religious thick-headedness, the extent to which these old yarns can be repeated year after year. They are the stock-in-trade of every peripatetic evangelist, and bring joy to the hearts of multitudes of believers.

A Sussex reader of the *Daily Mirror* asks: "What is the good of compelling people to go to church? Can a forced form of worship profit any man or be acceptable to the Deity?" Also, can it profit a man to be compelled by Sabbatarian laws to abstain from enjoying Sunday as he likes? The bigots certainly do think that forced abstinence is acceptable in the sight of God. They have 'nt the majority of the nation with them, thank goodness.

Teachers had better be careful. Mr. W. Scott, of Highwood, Princes Risboro, Bucks—the gentleman deserves the fullest publicity, has written a letter to the Education Committee complaining of the gross abuse of his position by a teacher, who by his conduct has caused great disappointment in his, the parent's, home. The teacher in question actually dared to tell his boys that Father Christmas was not a real individual. We are not surprised at the father's indignation. If teachers are permitted, to instil such scepticism in the minds of children what may they not do unless checked? Presently they may suggest doubts about the divinity of kings, the truth of St. George and the Dragon, the story of the Flood, or the historic truth of the Garden of Eden. Mr. Scott has performed a service for his generation, and such high-minded patriotism will endear him to the hearts of Mr. Hilaire Belloc, Lord Eustace Percy, "Jix," Billy Sunday and the Bishop of London. It is men of Mr. Scott's stamp that won for England the religious liberty we are still trying to get.

A fortnight ago we commented on the Bishop of London's story of how he had received his present appointment. His tale then was that when dealing with some letters that had accumulated during his absence from home he found one from the Prime Minister. He at once put it at the bottom of the pile—the dramatic effect would have been destroyed had he opened it at once, and naturally one puts on one side letters from a Prime Minister until matters of genuine importance have been dealt with. Then he discovered it was a communication begging him to accept the vacant Bishopric of London.

Now in the *Daily Telegraph* for January 27, apropos of the Bishop having reached his seventy-third birthday, there is another version. Dr. Ingram was going to address a working man's meeting in the East End. Again we have to note the quite providential arrangement that he was on the top of a bus going to a working man's meeting. But this time instead of putting the letter from the Prime Minister at the bottom of his correspondence, and reading it last, he opened the letter while on top of the bus, and found that King Edward insisted on his appointment. So that it was not the Archbishop of Canterbury, as before stated, but King Edward who was responsible. First the Archbishop, second King Edward, the third should be a special visit from the Archangel Gabriel demanding his appointment. But the Bishop should settle on which story is to go forward, and tell the same story each time.



## National Secular Society.

THE Funds of the National Secular Society are legally controlled by Trust Deed, and those who wish to benefit the Society by gift or bequest may do so with complete confidence that any money so received will be properly administered and expended.

The following form of bequest is sufficient for anyone who desires to benefit the Society by will:—

I hereby give and bequeath (*Here insert particulars of legacy*), free of all death duties to the Trustees of the National Secular Society for all or any of the purposes of the Trust Deed of the said Society, and I direct that a receipt signed by two of the trustees of the said Society shall be a good discharge to my executors for the said legacy.

Any information concerning the Trust Deed and its administration may be had on application.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

W. WEARING.—Thanks for references. They will prove useful. Men in the Army and Navy suffer a genuine wrong so long as the religious service remains compulsory. It can only be remedied by both services treating its members as responsible beings capable of making up their minds on religious subjects. It does not follow that because a right which every subject possesses is not mentioned in the Army or Navy Regulations, that this right is abrogated. The regulations will take that right for granted. Do you know of a case in which the description given by the recruit, of his religious or non-religious opinions was refused?

R. BELL.—We cannot insert all the letters we receive, even when the subject dealt with is one that might warrant their publication. Quite a number of considerations must determine their insertion or rejection.

R. AUBERT.—Mr. Cohen is replying to Mr. Ford Ruther's article next week. But you have hardly grasped his point of view. He does not so much contradict what was said as he wishes to put the question from another point of view.

J. HUTCHINSON.—Thanks for anecdote. Quite a good one.

A. RADLEY.—As the B.B.C. will insist on inflicting upon its subscribers such massed stupidities as those moved by the Archdeacon of Macclesfield, we can do nothing but protest, and hope for better times. The Venerable J. H. Thorpe is quite safe in the pulpit—even in the B.B.C. pulpit.

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

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

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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.

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

## Sugar Plums.

The Secular Hall, Leicester, was well filled on Sunday last, for the first of Mr. Cohen's course of four lectures. The interest shown promises well for the remainder of the course. Mr. Gimson occupied the chair. The Secular Hall celebrates, in the course of another three weeks, fifty years of its existence. It has done excellent work during that time, and its influence on the general life of Leicester must have been in every way good. It has always maintained an eclectic platform without in the least degree sacrificing its avowed ad-

herence to Freethought principles. Mr. Cohen's subject to-day (February 8) is "The Reign of the Gods." The lecture commences at 6.30.

On Friday, February 13, Mr. Cohen has promised to speak at a meeting of the Worker's Circle, Circle House, Great Alie Street, Aldgate, on the subject of "Freethought and Freethinking." Admission is free, and there will be opportunity for discussion.

We were pleased to see a couple of letters in last week's *Schoolmaster* advocating the policy of Secular Education. One is from "Paterfamilias," the other from a certificated teacher. The latter quite properly points out the existence of religious tests for teachers so long as religion is in the State-supported schools. What we should like now would be for the *Schoolmaster* itself to speak out frankly and fearlessly on the matter. We do not wonder that religious managers treat teachers as they do, when so powerful an organization does not speak out openly on so important a subject. It only requires a lead from headquarters for the vast majority of teachers in the country to go solidly for what has been declared over and over again, and by the present Prime Minister, to be the only just and honest policy.

The Fulham Branch of the N.S.S. has arranged a course of Sunday evening lectures, running from February 1 till March 22 at the Co-operative Society's Hall, 249 Dawes Road, Fulham. The lecturer last week was Mr. C. Tuson. To-day (February 8) the speaker is Mr. I. Ebury. His subject is "The Sermon on the Mount." Each lecture will commence at 7.30. West London Freethinkers will please note.

Mr. G. Whitehead lectures twice for the Manchester Branch to-day (Sunday) in the Engineers' Hall, 120 Rusholme Road, Manchester. At 3.0 p.m., he will speak on "Life Before Birth—Evidence for Evolution," and at 6.30, on "Evolution of Life from Microbe to Man." Mr. Whitehead's work in Manchester should ensure a good attendance at both meetings.

At the Welfare Hall, Chester-le-Street, Mr. R. H. Rosetti will lecture for the local Branch on "The God Men of Science Believe In," at 7.0 p.m. to-day (Sunday). The local saints are very active and enthusiastic, and will no doubt see that the hall is well filled. There will be music from 6.30 p.m. by Mr. J. Chapman and others.

We are pleased to hear that Messrs. Clayton and Corrigan had good meetings at Manchester and Liverpool, respectively. We are quite sure that the lectures themselves would be interesting, and so should pave the way for larger meetings in the future.

Professor G. Elliot Smith's first lecture on "The Evolution of Man," delivered last Monday at the Conway Hall, attracted a large and attentive audience. The lecturer's lucid discussion of his subject, which dealt with the controversies aroused by the discoveries of the skulls at Java, Piltdown, and particularly those found recently in China, left no doubt whatever that man, like the modern ape, is descended from some ape-like ancestor common to both types. The remaining three lectures should prove, if anything, even more absorbing than this one and should therefore not be missed by anybody interested in such a fascinating subject.

The Freethought Press Association of New York has selected Mr. Cohen's *War, Civilization and the Churches* as their book of the month, and has ordered a large consignment to meet the demand of their members. We refrain from reprinting its very flattering comments on the book.

Mr. Cohen intended commenting on the interesting article by Ford Ruther, "The Paragraph Mind," which appeared in our last issue, and which was a reply to the "Views and Opinions" of the previous week. Other things had to take precedence, so that Mr. Cohen's rejoinder has had to be postponed until next week. The subject will not be the worse for a week's delay.

## Witchcraft and the Erotic Life.

BURNT alive unto his death. Such was the fate, in 1634, of Father D'Urbain Grandier, Roman Catholic curate of St. Peter's in Loudun, and Canon of the Church of the Holy Cross. His alleged crime was that, in the diocese of Poitiers, by means of magic he had carnally bedevilled the Ursuline nuns of Loudun, in France. The witnesses against him were the nuns upon whom he worked his satanic art. It was only supernatural magic that made it possible for Fr. Grandier to project his body invisibly even through the walls of the convent, to accomplish the seduction of consecrated virgins who had never even seen him, except by such magic. So Fr. Grandier, by his disembodied spirit and the help of Satan, committed fornications and adulteries with many pious women, who would not have yielded their bodies to Grandier in the flesh. The judges were his fellow priests. The executioners were the civil authorities, who must act their subordinate rôle at the behest of the Church, wherever its supremacy over the State is fully admitted.

As the proceedings of this trial unfold, it will become increasingly apparent that the witchcraft of the accused consisted wholly in the fact that nuns and other depraved women had quite ordinary erotic fantasies, in which Fr. Grandier officiated as would their physical lover, if they could ever have tolerated a physical lover. These dreams and visions are quite usual under the unusual conditions in which nuns live. Having first been infected with ecclesiastical estophobia, these women were compelled to defend themselves strenuously against the possible imputation that their phantasmal eroticisms were the product of their own organic need. Accordingly their dreams of copulation with Fr. Grandier's ghost, or disembodied spirit, were given the certitude of his physical presence and of superhuman seductiveness. Hence his alleged alliance with the devil and his satanic magic, were fully proven.

Fr. Grandier is said to have been "a majestic and stately man, endowed with some natural and acquired perfection." Again, it is said that, "The curate of Loudun was a handsome genteel man, and a fine speaker." Even his enemies credited him with "extraordinary talent." Evidently he was the ideal man to engage the fancy of inhibited women, and those neglected of men. A popular priest of unusual ability, withal a little arrogant, he was just the man to excite also the envy and hatred of the less gifted priests. He seems to have been an independent thinker, and showed this spirit in a manuscript he wrote in favour of marriage for priests. This was horrible, of course, and while envious priests thereupon could plausibly brand him as a lecherous heretical beast, some Protestants began to regard him as being secretly in sympathy with them. His zeal for independence may have enticed Fr. Grandier into another dangerous situation. He was credited with being the author of an anonymous libel entitled: "La Cordounnière de Loudun" (the shoemaker's wife of Loudun)—a libel which "was very injurious to the person and birth of Cardinal Richelieu." Influential enemies help to make witchcraft believable.<sup>1</sup>

In Loudun was a convent of Ursuline nuns, most of whom were daughters of the nobility, and among them was Madame de Sazille, a relative of Cardinal

Richelieu. At this time Prior Moussaut, who had charge of the Spiritual welfare of these nuns, died, and Fr. Grandier, who had never had any connexion with the convent, offered himself as a candidate to succeed Prior Moussaut. This bore its natural fruit in the dreams of the nuns. Erotic dreams of women resulted in giving Fr. Grandier an unsavory reputation. Accordingly Fr. Grandier's enemies reported that he offered himself as the spiritual guide for these nuns, in order "to make a dishonest seraglio of their convent and as many filthy concubines as there were handsome virgins." The credulous and superstitious enemies of Fr. Grandier afterwards said that he had resolved "to give plenty of work to the confessor and to his penitents." Canon Mignon, a friend of the bishop and an enemy of Fr. Grandier, received the appointment of spiritual guide to these nuns. The continued erotic dreams of nuns, and Fr. Grandier's temperament combined to prepare the way, so that his enemies made a feared and hated wizard of him. Naturally enough he became the centre of heated controversy, and of whispered scandals. Thus was the human stage setting erected for Fr. Grandier's undoing and death. It was such conditions that gave his envious priestly enemies their desired opportunity for a safe adventure, in desperate clerical politics.

His enemies say: "His iniquities had rendered him the scourge of the town, whose principal curate and greatest scandal he was at one and the same time." Believing himself secure by virtue of a feeling of innocence and of a great popularity, "he treated those from whom he differed with contempt, and in his preachings even dared to question the privileges of the Carmelites. He publicly ridiculed their sermons, and he even encroached on Episcopal jurisdiction, by granting dispensations from the publication of marriage bans. This last caused a sensation, and was reported to Louis de la Roche-posay, Bishop of Poitiers, to whom at the same time were addressed numerous complaints of the irregular conduct of the curate, and of the scandal that he caused. The prelate had him arrested, and imprisoned till his trial, which took place on June 2, 1630." At the trial were priests claiming to have been spying on him, who offered strong circumstantial evidence, tending to prove that his fornications and adulteries by "magic" had objective physical reality. Some of these spiritual adulteries were alleged to have taken place even within his church. What else could be expected by the godly, from a priest who publicly ridiculed sermons of the Carmelites, who believed in a married clergy, who presumed to dispense with the publication of marriage bans, and who dared to libel Cardinal Richelieu? Obviously he must be a lecherous heretical beast, and presumably guilty of everything, at least until proven innocent.

As might be expected, the ecclesiastical authorities of Poitiers did find him guilty of magic or witchcraft (not plain human fornication nor mere physical adultery) and they inflicted the severest penalties. He appealed to the Parliament of Paris, however, and by its decree was referred to the presidial of Loudun, which declared him innocent. The priestly witnesses who claimed to have been spying upon Fr. Grandier, had retracted their evidence. A case of priests having a conscience, Fr. Grandier's friends called it, but his enemies said that the priests were bribed to retract. Far from showing humility, Fr. Grandier now, so his enemies complained, "looked upon his acquittal as a triumph, and returned to Loudun with a laurel branch in his hands, for the mere purpose of insulting his opponents." How the obvious can be twisted to meet the needs of hatred. Yet who can now tell what was the truth? Such interpretation of his "laurel branch" brought its natural results.

<sup>1</sup> Anbin, Nicolas. Cruels effects de la Vengeance du Cardinal de Richelieu, ou historie des Diables de Loudun, de la Possession des religieuses Ursulines et de la condamnation et du supplice d'Urbain Grandier, Curé de la meme Ville. Amsterdam Etienne Roger, 1716.

"He was not satisfied with having obtained the full meed he was entitled to," says his enemy. Perhaps a guiltless conscience, made Fr. Grandier overconfident in judicial justice. "He resolved to carry his vengeance as far as the law will allow him; and prepared to prosecute before the courts all those who had taken steps against him. . . . God, who intended to cut off this gangrenous member from the body of His Church, and make him an example memorable to all ages, abandoned him to his own wilful blindness."

His fame for lechery and his vindication, together with his unusual physical and intellectual attainments, made Fr. Grandier ever more important, as the ideal phantasmal lover for the unacknowledged erotic-urges of all psychologically inhibited or physically isolated females, in the vicinity of Loudun. What is more natural therefore, than that he should appear ever more persistently in the erotic hallucinations, of nuns, and others, who were in need of a phantasmal realization of their unconscious cravings, or their merely unacknowledged and suppressed desires.

"Extraordinary symptoms began to declare themselves within the convent, but they were hushed up as far as possible, and not allowed to be known outside the walls. . . . It was therefore decided to work in the greatest secrecy, and to cure, or at least mitigate the evil. It was hoped that God, touched by the patience with which the chastisement was borne, would Himself in His mercy, send a remedy. This was all that prudence could devise, but human prudence always infinitely limited in its views; Divine prudence is quite another thing. God [or at least Fr. Grandier's priestly enemies] has resolved that the mystery of iniquity should no longer lie buried. As the church at its birth, gained great credit though similar events, so again, in this case, did they serve to revive the faith of true believers, and so it will be again in future. . . . As usually happens, the extraordinary phenomena displayed in the person of the nuns were taken for the effect of sexual disease. But soon suspicions arose that they proceeded from supernatural causes; and at least they perceived what God intended every one to see."

"Thus the nuns, after having employed the physicians of the body, apothecaries and medical men, [who knew not how to cure them of their erotic hallucinations] were obliged to have recourse to the physicians of the soul, and to call in both lay and clerical doctors, their confessor no longer being equal to the immensity of the labour. For they were seventeen in number; and every one was found to be either fully possessed, or partially under the influence of the Evil One." The last resort must be tried. True Christians must despise these grinning impostors. Exorcisms were then employed. The demon, forced to manifest himself yielded his name. He began by giving these girls the most horrible convulsions. He went so far as to raise from the earth the body of the Superior who was being exorcised, and to reply to secret thoughts, which were manifest neither in words nor by any exterior signs. Questioned, according to the form prescribed by the ritual, as to why he entered the body of the nun, he replied, it was from hate. But when being questioned as to the name of the magician, he answered that it was Urbain Grandier. Profound astonishment seized Canon Mignon and his assistants. They had indeed looked upon Grandier as a scandalous priest, but never had they imagined that he was guilty of magic. They were therefore not satisfied with one single questioning: they repeated the interrogatory several times, and always received the same reply." So the devil, wanting in ordinary loyalty to his faithful servant, betrayed his "magician" (Grandier) into the hands of his priestly enemies.

The canon informed the magistrates, and Fr. Grandier prepared for his defence. But the magistrates are said to have been "infected with heresy." That is to say, the magistrates were suspected of having more confidence in Fr. Grandier, than they had in the objective realities of the Satanic seduction of the nuns. At this third trial of Fr. Grandier, his enemies among the magistrates, finding themselves in a minority, withdrew. The remaining magistrates acquitted Fr. Grandier. "Excitement rose in the public mind, a thousand arguments on this or that side permeated the town, and a thousand quarrels took place on all sides."

The next step of Grandier's enemies was to see to it that the Queen was properly informed. She sent one of her chaplains to investigate, personally, what was going on. Louis XIII also sent a commissioner to Loudun, but for another purpose. He too, saw what a ferment the town was in . . . and the kind of man who caused the commotion." Fr. Grandier must really be guilty. It could not by any possibility be that "consecrated virgins" just naturally had erotic dreams, and because of priestly instilled erotic phobias, explained them in terms of Satanic possession. "The complaints of those who were the victims of the [hallucinatory Satanic] debaucheries, of the pride, or of the vengeance of the curate, touched him, and it seemed to him to be important to put an end to the scandal." As is always the case in great excitement the essential thing is to end the scandal, not to ascertain whether it had any basis in objective facts. We always want order, without being troubled to inquire as to who is most responsible for the disorder.

On his return, this commissioner "informed the King and the Cardinal Minister [Richelieu the enemy of Grandier] of the facts: Louis XIII [from having been an extremely lecherous and erotic child and youth had become fanatically pious and just, as an overcompensation (See Journal de Dr. Heroard; also Trelon Louis XIII and his Epilepsy. *Aesculape*, 1929.—Ed.)]. perceived the greatness of the evil." He appointed M. de Laubardemont, the commissioner who had already accepted Fr. Grandier's guilt, to return and "investigate the matter without appeal; with orders to choose in the neighbouring jurisdictions the most straightforward and learned judges." Of course, this meant "straight forward," from the point of view of Grandier's enemies.

The "straight forward" ones at Loudun had already acquitted Fr. Grandier. Thus Cardinal Richelieu vindicated the reputation of his relative, the nun, promoted the spiritual welfare of the church and of its priest. With the former acquittals ignored, and with a handpicked packed court, complete vengeance was guaranteed in advance and without the right of an appeal. All this, and Fr. Grandier's arrest without prior formal accusation, were justified then, as such conduct is still justified whenever hysterical panic or collective personal interest runs high in "King Mob."

THEODORE SCHROEDER.

(To be concluded.)

What shadows we are and what shadows we pursue.  
Burke.

With mirth and laughter, let old wrinkles come.  
Shakespeare.

Honour is unknown in despotic states.—Montesquieu.

## Progress of Anti-Religious Instruction in U.S.S.R.

*Translated by L. E. Hesse from the weekly Esperanto Organ, "Sennaciulo," of November 27, 1930.*

In its work, the Union of Militant Atheists in Russia (Uma) pays much attention to the education of its members, and of those workers on the fringe of the Union.

Widespread propaganda and agitation are the methods employed by Uma in its fight against religion. Herein is shown how problems of anti-religious education are dealt with in the Union's work.

Anti-religious instruction attracts not only Uma-members, but also all workers who are seeking some sort of knowledge in this direction. Anti-religious education consists of a network of Atheist Circles, Seminaries, Courses, Workers' and Peasants' Universities, and the anti-religious Departments in High Schools.

### CIRCLES.

The initial link in the chain of anti-religious instruction is the Circle, in which the audience become acquainted with elementary problems of Atheism. In an Atheist Circle one can usually meet people who have not definitely forsaken religion. They come, presumably, in order to test their own ideas concerning religious and atheist problems. It often happens that these waverers become active Atheists.

For Circle work the Central Committee of Uma publish three types of text-books—for workers, peasants, and Red-Army soldiers. In addition to these text-books, it issues programmes, recommended lists of anti-religious literature and various study methods.

Atheist Circles are not only concerned with studying. They organize excursions to museums, exhibitions, theatres and cinemas, and the best informed member of the party himself leads anti-religious propaganda in the districts of production, villages, etc.

It should be borne in mind that Circle work is carried on during leisure time, and the principle of voluntary effort is unreservedly accepted. Statistics of the Uma circles are not available, the absence of which is explained by the fact, that an Atheist Circle is such a widely used vehicle of instruction, that it is found in every workers' Club, in every sphere of production, and in many villages.

### SEMINARIES.

While Atheist Circles present only the elementary instruction, the seminaries prepare their pupils for practical anti-religious work, and coach propagandists, agitators and Atheist Circle leaders.

Special Seminaries are also organized for teachers in schools, for Workers' Faculties and Technical places of learning. Separate anti-religious seminaries are organized for medical students, etc. In the seminary too, the study is carried on in leisure hours, and like the Circles is purely voluntary. It does not bind its members in any way.

### COURSES.

Since 1924-25 anti-religious Courses have been organized in various places. Short-term courses of advanced practical training are arranged as part of the practical work of Uma. In 1926 there were forty-nine courses in operation, in 1927, sixty-five, and in 1928, eighty-nine. The Courses are established on a sub-district, district, or republic scale. Their task is to reinvigorate those conducting anti-religious work, in order to increase their capability.

### ANTI-RELIGIOUS UNIVERSITIES.

Experience of worker-peasant Universities has shown that they are an excellent media for mass education towards anti-religious activity and instruction. The programmes of these anti-religious universities are outlined for one, two or three years, and chiefly contain the following subjects:—

1. Dialectical and Historical Materialism (Marxism and Religion).
2. Natural Science and Religion.
3. History of Atheist thought.
4. Origins of the religious creeds and History of Religions.
5. Tasks and methods of anti-religious propaganda.

The anti-religious universities first made their appearance towards the end of 1928. By the summer of 1929, there were already in existence eleven of them. During the winter of 1929-30 we have information concerning thirty-five. The teaching in these universities generally occurs two or four times a week, in the evening after daily-work hours. In Moscow a special anti-religious radio university has been arranged.

L. E. HESSE.

## Church and State.

WHEN we speak of Church and State a host of ideas, historical no less than contemporary, immediately crowd into our minds, and all alike concern a theme so thoroughly traversed by writers of every period as to appear hackneyed to anyone having even a nodding acquaintance with the subject. But there is an aspect of the relationship between these two great institutions that will bear yet further treatment, for up to the present not much attention has been paid to it; or, at least, when it has been considered, the standpoint has been entirely political.

One of the grave faults of the Christian religion lies in the shifting of responsibility from the individual on to the shoulders of a Father God. That the Church demands of us a childlike mentality in order that we may receive and embrace her doctrines is not the worst that can be said; for once accepted, they teach a philosophy of world infantilism through a creed in which we figure all along the line as "God's children." Let me announce, here and now, that it is high time we spoke with rough candour of some of these Christian ideas still cherished by a people steeped in sentimentality; time we distinguished between poetry and puerility, between the picturesque and the silly, between a refined delicacy and a maudlin effeminacy, between Schumann's "Warum" and Elgar's "Salut D'Amour." I am my father's son, but not his child; and while there is beauty in the filial relationship, there is nought but pathos in the spectacle of a father and a grown-up child. It is the tragic spectacle of retarded mental development. That we are indeed God's children in the eyes of the Church we have no reason to doubt, for she has never treated the world as either mentally or morally grown up. And when a man of three score years and ten is heard saying "Father" to a priest with scarce enough beard to mar the smooth contour of his youthful countenance, there is food for thought awaiting all who have the eye to follow a straw in the wind.

Morally speaking the Church hinders instead of helps the development of the race. Instead of setting before us the effects of our actions upon other people, and in this world, she emphasizes the consequences of our conduct to ourselves, and in a world to come. The result is that, instead of busying ourselves about the work of removing the evils we have created, we are more concerned with the task of staving off the punishment that threatens us. The Roman idea of absolution ought to be repugnant to a manly fellow, but it would certainly be comforting to a child. Only a child wants to be forgiven; a man desires more to put things right. Not only in this,

but in all sides of our religion do we meet with the same demoralizing outlook. We are part of a scheme that was founded, and continues to be built, by other hands than ours. We are not the builders but the builder's labourers. The shaping of the world is his not ours, and likewise its destiny is in his charge. We fly to him in all life's difficulties and perplexities, for help, for guidance, for comfort, for sustenance, for forgiveness. Is it thus that the race will ever grow up? A true man's joy is to support, not to lean. There is a grandeur about self-reliance, a dignity that redeems it for ever from a mere egoism; a strength and austerity that repulse the jibes of those who would degrade it to the level of conceit and vulgar pomposity. But here is the danger. What will happen if we take away the Father God only to put in his place a Father State? A nation that relies upon the Father God is bound in the long run to discover its mistake; but the Father State is actual and powerful, and the experience of its beneficiaries will merely serve to increase their dependence. Yet the tendency to this substitution marks the drift of thought in many parts of the Secular Movement to-day. We are living in an age of spoon-feeding: Commencing in the schools it is being carried onwards through adolescence into adult life. Where lessons used to be learned they are now taught. Where men once asked, "How shall we get what we want?" they now ask, "Who will give us what we want?" And the answer is always, "The State." The trouble is people do not understand that the State is, or ought to be, themselves. To them it is simply a new Father God. The State will plan. The State will found. The State will build. The State will punish. The State will pardon. The State will provide. Unconsciously and by devious paths a great body of opinion in the Freethought Movement has found its way into these channels. The evidence crops up here and there in various and apparently disconnected forms; and many philosophic-political movements and tendencies bearing this complexion are peculiarly linked up with anti-religion. Would that we could see our fellow countrymen in eager pursuit not of benefits but of opportunities; clamouring, not for the privileges of children but for the responsibilities of men; demanding, not to be treated better than they deserve, but to be made better than they are. That would be a humility worth possessing.

Church and State; let them be kept apart. Let them not merge insidiously under the very eyes of those who would fain strike the blow that cleaves. And finally, when it comes to the complete rationalization of life, let us make sure that what we accomplish is actually the secularization of the Church and not merely the deification of the State. We must leave God in His Heaven; but we cannot do with Him in Whitehall.

MEDICUS.

## Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

NORMAN ANGELL AND COLONIES.

SIR,—In your issue of February 1, I find quoted that very superficial thinker, Norman Angell, as follows:—"We talk, for instance, of *owning* colonial possessions, of France having *taken back* Alsace from Germany . . . But the idea that when a province is transferred from one Government to another there is a transfer of property is, broadly speaking, nonsense. When a province is transferred the fields, factories, houses, carpets, walking-sticks, remain in the same hands."

For the sake of brevity I shall omit Alsace, and speak merely of colonies. Since the earliest dawn of history, the essential feature of colonization has been the transfer of property from one people to another.

Let us take the history of the English people. Fifteen hundred years ago they lived in Schleswig-Holstein, a very small territory, and the Welsh owned England. The English came over and colonized England. Did they respect the rights of property? Not much. They massacred the Welsh and seized and occupied their land.

Then came the Normans. Did they respect Saxon rights of property? They did not. They took most of

the land from the Saxons, and turned them into serfs.

Five hundred years ago the whole of North and South America was owned by Red Indians. The Pilgrim Fathers went over. Did they respect Red Indian rights of property? They certainly did not. They massacred the Indians and took their land. To-day the Indians in the United States and Canada have only a few poor reservations, and the rest of the land is owned by the white man.

We did exactly the same thing in Australia and New Zealand. To-day there are hardly any Australian Aborigines left, and the Maoris are confined to a small part of what was once their country.

We are doing the same thing to-day in Africa, in a somewhat less brutal manner. The whole aim of the Hertzog Government is to give the white man as much of South Africa as possible, and to pen the black man into the smallest space possible. Exactly the same thing is going on in Kenya.

Because the English-speaking race is to-day gorged to satiety with land, does anybody imagine that the nature of man has changed? If so, let him read what is being said and written in other lands to-day. Says Mussolini: "We are hungry for land, because we are prolific and intend to remain so." And again, says Mussolini: "Italy demands that her indisputable need of sun and land shall be recognized by all other nations. Should they fail to do so, Italy will be forced to take matters into her own hand." Still more recently Mussolini has said: "Italy must expand or she will explode."

Not long ago the largest newspaper in Japan wrote as follows: "It is a great pity that artificial laws of other nations are standing between Japan and her natural expansion abroad. The question is, which is stronger in the long run—the natural law or man-made legislation?"

As for Germany, her writers were so perpetually harping on this subject before the war, that it is incredible that anybody should have failed to understand. Said Bernhardt: "We are compelled to obtain space for our increasing population and markets for our growing industries." And again, he said: "The instinct of self-preservation leads inevitably to war, and the conquest of foreign soil."

To-day Australia has only two people to the square mile. Japan has 472. Because of that fact we are building a naval base at Singapore. Does anybody seriously believe that if Japan were to seize Australia, she would have more scruple about expropriating the British than the British have had about expropriating everyone else?

There is one way, and only one, to get rid of war. If the land of the world is fairly divided between the different races, and if all nations strictly limit their birth-rates, it will then be possible for the world to have peace. Anybody who imagines there is any other way is as good a fool as the man who believes in Jonah's whale, and a far more dangerous one.

R. B. KERR.

## ATHEISM AND THE BIBLE.

SIR,—In the *Freethinker* of a recent date, Mr. Arthur Hughes says: "Its (the Bible's) many imbecilities . . . provide an *indisputable* reason for Atheism." Mr. Hughes overlooks the fact that a man can be a Theist without believing in the Bible. Paine said: "I believe in one God and no more." Yet he rejected the Bible as the "Word of God."

W. CLARKE.

## National Secular Society.

REPORT OF EXECUTIVE MEETING HELD JANUARY 30, 1931.

THE President, Mr. Chapman Cohen, in the chair.

Also present: Messrs. Clifton, Wood, Corrigan, Hornbrook, LeMaine, Ebury, Mrs. Quinton, Junr., Mrs. Venton, Miss Kough, and the Secretary.

Several apologies for unavoidable absence were read. Minutes of the previous meeting were read and accepted, and the monthly Financial Statement presented. New members were admitted to Perth, Manchester,

Liverpool, Fulham and Chelsea, Bethnal Green and the Parent Society.

Progress was reported in the Montreal Blasphemy case appeal, and the President's action was endorsed. Correspondence was dealt with from Liverpool, Glasgow, Newcastle, South London and West London.

The death of the widow of the late R. Bulman was reported, and notice given that the N.S.S. would benefit under the will. Details of summer work were discussed and the Secretary instructed to proceed with arrangements. The report of the Annual Dinner was presented, the excellent musical programme, and speeches were a noted feature, and satisfaction was expressed at the general arrangements. It was agreed a Social be held at the Caxton Hall, on Saturday evening, April 18. The next Executive Meeting will be held on Friday, February 27.

R. H. ROSETTI,

General Secretary.

## Society News.

### WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S.

A MOST interesting lecture by Sir W. Arbuthnot Lane, on "Health," was delivered on Sunday evening at the Conway Hall.

From the various observations the lecturer has made in all countries and climates, the most simplest form of food are the healthiest and most nourishing.

The lecturer's minute description of the human anatomy and its functions made it clear to all present of the necessity of getting as much sunshine as possible.

Sun worship was and is now the most rational religion, and certainly the healthiest.

Many questions were answered by Sir William, after which Mr. J. P. Gilmour moved a vote of thanks which was fully endorsed by the audience.—B.A.I.e.M.

## SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

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

### LONDON.

#### OUTDOOR.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 12.0, Messrs. A. D. McLaren and B. A. Le Maine; 3.30, Messrs. C. E. Wood and C. Tuson; Every Wednesday, at 7.30, Messrs. C. E. Wood and C. Tuson; every Friday at 7.30, Messrs. A. D. McLaren and B. A. Le Maine. Current *Freethinkers* can be obtained opposite the Park Gates, on the corner of Edgware Road, during and after the meetings.

FULHAM AND CHELSEA BRANCH N.S.S. (corner of Shorrolds Road, North End Road, Walham Green): Saturday, 7.30. Speakers: Messrs. A. Frank, W. Aley, and F. Day.

#### INDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N.S.S. (Workers Circle, Great Alie Street, Aldgate, E.1): Friday, February 13, Mr. C. Cohen will lecture on "Freethought and Freethinking." Commence at 8 p.m.

FULHAM AND CHELSEA BRANCH N.S.S. (London Co-operative Society's Hall, 249 Dawes Road, Fulham): 7.30, Mr. L. Ebury—"Sermon on the Mount."

HAMPSTEAD ETHICAL INSTITUTE (The Studio Theatre, 59 Finchley Road, N.W.8, near Marlborough Road Station): 11.15, Mr. H. Snell, M.P.—"The World Outlook for Peace and Progress in 1931."

HIGHGATE DEBATING SOCIETY (Winchester Hotel, Archway Road, Highgate, N.): Wednesday, February 11, at 7.45, Mr. L. Ebury.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Winter Garden, 37 High Street, Clapham near Clapham North Underground Station): 7.16, Mr. R. B. Kerr (Editor *The New Generation*)—"Bernard Shaw's Intelligent Woman's Guide."

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1): 11.0, John A. Hobson, M.A.—"The Post War Family."

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Oliver Goldsmith School, Peckham Road): 7.0, Majorie Gullan and the London Verse-Speaking Choir will give a recital of Prose and Verse.

THE NON-POLITICAL METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (City of London Hotel, 107 York Road, Camden Town, N.W.7, facing The Brecknock): 7.30, Mr. J. MacArthur—"Feminism."

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.): 7.0, Mr. A. D. McLaren—"The Roman Catholic Revival and the Freethinkers Interest in it."

### COUNTRY.

#### INDOOR.

BRADFORD BRANCH N.S.S. (Godwin Cafe, Godwin Street): 7.30, Mr. T. Sutcliffe will open a discussion on "Is the Religious Outlook Determined by the Economic Position of an Individual?"

CHESTER-LE-STREET BRANCH N.S.S. (Welfare Hall, Chester-le-Street): 7.15, Mr. R. H. Rosetti (General Secretary, N.S.S.)—"The God Men of Science Believe in." A short musical programme by Mr. Jos. Chapman before the lecture. Members and friends please note:

EAST LANCASHIRE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION (28 Bridge Street, Burnley): 2.30, Mr. J. Clayton—"Some Problems of Theism—No. 1, The Doctrine of Freewill." Questions and Discussion. Don't forget February 22 and March 1, two lectures by Mr. Casey, of Bury, "The Workings of the Mind."

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY—City (Albion Street) Hall, at 6.30, Dr. Jas. Dunlop, "White Magic." Monday, February 9, at 8.0, in Knightswood (West) Parish Church Hall, Loanfoot Avenue, debate between Mr. Lindsay and Mr. E. Hale—"The Bible v. Science."

LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate): 6.30, Mr. Chapman Cohen (London)—"God and Man."

LIVERPOOL (Merseyside) BRANCH N.S.S. (Transport Hall, 41 Islington, Liverpool—entrance Christian Street): Sunday, February 8, Mr. Otto Baier (Positivist Church of Humanity, Liverpool), "The Defence of our Freedom." Doors will be opened at 6.30 as usual, but Mr. Baier will not commence until 7.45. Current *Freethinkers* will be on sale.

MANCHESTER BRANCH N.S.S. (Engineers' Hall, 120 Rusholme Road, Manchester): Mr. George Whitehead, 3.0, "Life Before Birth—Evidence for Evolution." 6.30, "Evolution of Life from Microbe to Man."

PAISLEY BRANCH N.S.S. (Bakers Hall, 5 Forbes Place): 7.0, Mr. Harry Paul—"Politics and God." Usual Branch meeting on Wednesday, February 11 in the same hall.

PERTH BRANCH N.S.S. (Secular Room, 122 Canal Street): 2.0, Mr. Robert Gunn—"Scottish Calvinism." Chairman, John S. Jumsden. Questions and Discussion.

## Rationalist Press Association (Glasgow District)

Central Halls, 25 Bath Street,

Sunday, February 15th, at 3 p.m.

**Professor MORRIS GINSBERG, M.A., D.Litt.,**  
Martin White Professor of Sociology, University of London.

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