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## Views and Opinions.

### Seeking God.

We have it on high religious authority that it is a very serious thing to fall into the hands of the living God. And in practice, believers in God, particularly believers in the Christian God, seem in no great hurry to enter his presence. They are always "seeking God," and they are always rejoicing that they have "found" him; but when it comes to being "translated" into his company they show a strange reluctance to the process. Judging from the way believers cling to earth they would seem to regard it as a calamity to be transported to heaven. So we may take it, judging from the practice of those who claim to know most about God, that it really is a terrible thing to fall into his hands.

On the other hand it would seem to be an equally serious thing to make sure that there is a God whose fatherly embrace we are determined to dodge for so long as is possible. In the game of devil-dodging and God-dodging we employ a very large body of men who claim to be God's representatives, we spend huge sums of money in the building and maintenance of temples to the honour of what may be a quite imaginary being, and the amount of energy expended in getting people "right with God" is an enormous waste if there should happen not to be anyone with whom we can get right. Look at it as we may, this getting right with God seems a troublesome and an expensive business.

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### Wanted, a Test.

The distressing thing is that all this bother may be about someone as mythical as Old Mother Hubbard. There may not be a God into whose hands we may fall. It may be that the tithes and mining royalties and rents we pay, and the taxes we remit are not for the glory of God but for the benefit of the clergy. After all God is only an hypothesis. He is not an

established and verifiable fact. You cannot take "God" and force him upon a man as you may compel him to accept a scientific generalization. God is an hypothesis, and, as I have so often said, an hypothesis must do something, must explain something to justify its existence. But God explains nothing; he is a force that does nothing. What is needed is some decisive test, to settle the question one way or another. If we cannot get this then it would seem only common-sense to refrain from bothering about an existence of so dubious a character.

The difficulty is to see where this decisive test is to come from. There was the pious legend of Charles Bradlaugh daring God to prove His existence by striking him dead. This was really the test which Christians themselves had cited in cases where they asserted God had struck men dead for taking his name in vain. But in the Bradlaugh case nothing happened. Not even the watch stopped. Then there was Professor Tyndall's classic case where he offered to equip two hospital wards, treating the patients in the one with prayer, and those in the other with science. This again was only one of the ways in which believers in God have said he acted, for they have produced numerous instances in which God has demonstrated his existence by curing the sick. I am quite sure that no Christian would have objected to an Atheist being struck dead or to one in a hospital being killed. Christians do not really object to tests, what they object to is a test, one that is—to use a scientific term—controlled. They will see the hand of God in something after it has happened, but they will not submit to a test that is conceived in a genuinely scientific spirit. They like to back a horse after the race is run.

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### Once Upon a Time.

To be quite fair it should be pointed out that at one time believers in God actually suggested experiments to prove his existence. There is that story in the first Book of Kings which evidenced something like a scientific spirit. Said Elijah to the prophets of Baal, "If your God is the real God follow him, if mine is the true God follow him. So let us test the question. Get a bullock and cut it up, and place a lot of wood underneath it, but no fire. Then let each of us pray to his God to prove who is the genuine article by sending down fire from heaven to do the cooking." Now that was a reasonable test, and the prophets being as "sporty" as Elijah, agreed. So they each prayed, but no fire came from the god of the prophets. Then Elijah offered his prayer, pointing out to Jehovah how much was at stake, and at once God sent down the fire as requested. A test of that kind would just about kill Atheism to-day. Then there are all the histories of boys who have been drowned by God for playing games on Sunday, of Infidels who have been blinded or paralysed for "blaspheming." And we have the



solemn invocation in the courts of witnesses who call on God to do something terrible to them if they do not tell the truth. All these are really tests of whether God exists or not, and I suggest quite seriously that the Lambeth Conference and the Free Church Council and the National Secular Society should each appoint a number of delegates to devise test experiments to decide the question once for all. If God exists he ought to be doing something, and how is one to find out what he does or when he does it unless one devises the right kind of experiment to find out? If getting hold of God, or getting right with God, is of the tremendous importance that believers say it is, some kind of a test should be devised and applied? A God who is *everywhere* ought to be located *somewhere*. A God who does everything ought occasionally to be found doing something. A God who is filled with wisdom ought not to be offended if his followers very occasionally acted as though they were not congenial idiots, and seek evidence of his existence and activity. Parsons often complain that man forgets God, but it really looks as though God is hardly worth remembering.

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#### Experimenting with God.

Experimentation is man's method of finding out what is true and what is false, and no one ought to complain if the plan that has served mankind so well in other directions is attempted with regard to God. What is the use of telling us that we must get right with God if we cannot make sure that there is a God with whom to get right? In the recent New Zealand earthquake a woman who was taking the communion, and the priest who was administering it were both killed amid the ruins of the church in which God was being praised. These two had found God, they were getting into communication with him, they were actually eating him, and yet pious people called the earthquake an "Act of God." That is a very serious charge, and it is one that calls for the strictest scientific investigation. Will some Christian priest be good enough to suggest to us some kind of an experiment that will help to make plain whether God exists, or whether, if he exists, he does anything at all? I do not ask that he shall be shown to do something that is good, but that he can be shown to do anything, good or bad. The question of the existence of God is not at all a question of whether he is a good God or a bad God, but only if he exists. Whether he is good or bad we must make the best we can of him if he exists. Like a man taking a wife, man must take God for better or worse, and if he is worse than we took him to be we must make the best of a bad situation.

The unfortunate thing is that the taste for conducting experiments to see whether God exists is no longer in fashion. In the days when God did something, when he sent the thunder, and the pestilence, and struck men blind, or paralysed them, those who had these evidences of God's existence were quite unaware that they were getting the kind of experience that we should value nowadays. But now we do not worship prodigies, we catalogue them. Disinfectants and anti-toxins have taken the place of saintly relics and pious prayers. When there is an outbreak of diphtheria we look to the drains and not to divinity. Instead of talking of God who rides the whirlwind and rules the storm, the B.B.C. announcer tells us of barometric readings and depressions lying off the Atlantic, and doesn't give the deity the thousandth part of a chance to do anything at all. The Atheist is not asking even that God shall vindicate his government, all he is asking is that he shall demonstrate his existence. At present it would seem that we are encouraging an illusion in order to perpetuate an imposture.

The present-day believer appears to have got hold of the wrong end of the stick. He chatters about man getting right with God when it is really important that God should get right with man. There is plenty of evidence that man can get along without God. There are millions of men and women in that condition to-day, and they appear to be no worse for it. They do not suffer more than believers from the normal accidents and troubles of existence. They live as long and as happily as other folk. But there is no evidence whatever that God can get along without man. There have been hundreds and hundreds of gods, and they have been powerful just so long as man bothered about them. But they declined rapidly as their worshippers fell off. The Christian God is no exception to this rule. Just think of what he was, and then look at what he is! No one knows of anything he does, no one is ready to trust him with anything of importance. He cannot even be trusted to protect his own Churches from fire or earthquake. Scientists ignore him, statesmen fob him off with empty phrases, Bishops and Archbishops call in unbelieving doctors to cure them of disease, he cannot even protect his own worship against the competition of the Cinema. The gods are really in a parlous state. In the French Revolution, when it was asked what it was the Third Estate wanted, the answer was that it had been nothing, it wanted to be something, it ought to be everything. Of the gods it might be truly stated that they have been everything, they are now struggling to be something, the prospect is that they will become nothing.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

### The Judgment of Joan.

"At a time when all her world was Catholic Joan Arc was a Protestant."—Bernard Shaw.

"Humanity thinks slowly."—C. R. W. Newton.

"The best of prophets of the future is the past."—Byron.

"I see but one cross remaining on earth, and it is that of the unrepentant thief."—W. S. Landor.

On a bright May day five centuries ago thousands of people gathered in the town of Rouen to see a fine show. The ecclesiastics of the Holy Catholic Church were there with other dignitaries. For a woman was to be burned publicly for the alleged crimes of heresy and sorcery. That woman was Joan of Arc, who is now regarded as "a saint" by the very church which condemned her. Thus has the whirligig of time brought in its revenge. Burnt as a heretic and sorceress, Joan is now claimed by the most powerful Church in Christendom, and exploited by reactionary political associations for their own sorry ends.

Thanks to the historians, we know how the world wagged in those far-off days of the Ages of Faith. Its dirt, its grime, its sordidness, and also the fair flowers of human nobility, mark out the France in which Joan of Arc lived and exerted so potent an influence. With an imbecile king, ruling, as he fondly imagined, by divine right, a profligate court, and an arrogant and corrupt priesthood, France was in a condition far from enviable. Long years of domestic warfare had reduced the unfortunate French people almost to the condition of animals. Superstition hung over the country like a black cloud. The wildest legends, sacred and profane, found thousands of believers. Not only were the priests' stories of their saints credited readily, but the alleged supernatural was associated with ordinary life. One well-known French soldier was said to have sold his right hand to the Devil. A great baron, a marshal of France, and one of Joan's companions-in-arms, was said to have



decoyed children to his castles and offered their bodies as sacrifices to the Evil One.

In this murky atmosphere of ignorance and superstition Joan of Arc appeared like a lily in the mouth of Tartarus, and despite her great services to her country, was burnt to death publicly as a heretic and sorceress. Undoubtedly, Joan was heretical, however pious and patriotic. She put her own inspiration far above that of the priests of the Roman Catholic Church, and she aggravated her offence in the eyes of her pious murderers by the complete independence of her replies. Her execution by burning at the stake produced an enormous impression everywhere. This impression Roman Catholic priests will never efface by a trumpety and belated rehabilitation many centuries later.

The Ages of Faith were pitiless ages. Seventeen centuries of the Christian Religion had to pass before the last death by burning for heresy. Did not that padded and pedantic buffoon, King James I., send two heretics to the stake? An obstinate heretic was burnt at Smithfield in 1612, and another suffered after him at Lichfield. And the fires of fanaticism are still smouldering.

One was flaming not long since in Kentucky, U.S.A. In the town of Harlan lived a Baptist Minister, named Black, a Christian of the breed of the Ages of Faith. He is ever ready to destroy anything that seems to conflict with the teaching of the religion which he himself professes. Brother Black found a public place for his bonfire. He lit his faggots and fed the flames with heretical books. He burned Wells's *Outlines of History*, which he considered gave the lie to the book of "Genesis." He burned also a novel by Zane Grey, entitled *To the Last Man*, in which there were sentences displeasing to a Christian pastor. On top of these Brother Black cast a pack of playing cards; not, we think, because the pack was blasphemous, but because of the Puritan tradition against games. Maybe, Brother Black prefers the game of draughts.

Pastor Black could not really destroy the works of the authors he objected to in the flames of his bonfire. This was merely a gesture, a symbol. A man's book is a part of him. Maybe, this Christian minister, watching the fire devouring the books, might have seen, in his pious imagination, the writhing shapes of the arch-heretics, the authors of those blasphemous works. It is well for Mr. Wells, and the other authors that they were not living at the time of Joan of Arc. It is also well that they are neither citizens of Harlan, U.S.A. For Pastor Black is too much like the fanatics who burned Joan to death on that sad day in Rouen five centuries ago.

Should you say that such things are unthinkable and impossible to-day, the surprising thing is that people should think them even improbable. In the history of evolution five centuries are of so little moment. There is no reason to suppose that in so short a space the human species has undergone much change. Seventy generations ago, in this country of ours, priests of an older faith were burning their human victims regularly in the name of God. We regard such things as unthinkable, not because we are congenitally different from our ancestors, but because we have been brought up differently and live in a fresh environment. Humanity thinks so very slowly. Here in this country, supposed to be in the very forefront of civilization, we have an army of priests, 50,000 strong, with doctrines that have their roots in sheer savagery, and are a disgrace to a civilized people, usurping a place in the body politic as though they were of really profound social importance. More than ever now is the direct frontal attack on religion necessary. The Christian priesthood has always battered upon ignorance. Its greatest strength is the

tail-end of civilization. It represents the lowest culture in modern society. The clergy march at the back of the procession of humanity, and pretend, solemnly, to be the very vanguard of Light and Liberty, a proceeding which has given the mother organization the name of "The Great Lying Church."

MIMNERMUS.

## Veracity as a Factor in Ethical Development.

THE moral poverty of European culture due to the spiritual authority of the Christian religion, and to the intellectual dishonesty which that authority by its very nature has fostered, appears in a peculiarly sinister light when contrasted with the attitude to veracity and the spirit of investigation which, if they did not actually characterize certain earlier periods of antiquity, exerted at least some influence in them. When we turn, for instance, to the moral code of ancient Egypt, we find the authorities unanimous in stating that the ideal of truth held a prominent place in it, and even a lay student, reading the Book of the Dead, is struck by the frequent occurrence of the plea, "I have told the truth," urged by the souls who appear before Osiris for judgment.

The Chinese sage, Confucius, Zoroaster, the prophet of ancient Persia, and the sacred books of India, all assign a high place to veracity. Loyalty to the truth is a sacred duty. In the *Institutes of Vishnu* (viii. 36) the Hindu is taught that "truth ranks higher than a thousand horse-sacrifices," and the same principle is emphasized again and again. Many Christian writers, I know, point out that the Eastern sage did not always practice what he preached, but neither did the founder of their own religion, whom they idealize *ad libitum*, while applying the strictest standard of moral judgment to every other religious teacher.

To the Greek, it has often been said, goodness and beauty meant the same thing. How far veracity was an element in the moral life of the nation as a whole, is a question that has been much discussed. Whatever answer may be given to it, no honest student can fail to note the contrast between the best Greek thinkers' feeling for the real, as interpreted by human experience, their love of discussion as a means of eliciting truth, and the Christian emphasis on the cardinal virtue of accepting a fixed standard of "divine truth." "Virtue is knowledge," is the summing-up of Plato's practical philosophy, and may be regarded as a corollary to his evaluation of truth as an ethical factor. This view is prominent in the *Republic*, while in the *Apology* Socrates is made to assert that a life that does not inquire into fundamentals is not worth living. Aristotle, who was a keen student of natural science as well as philosophy, says that we must, if necessary in the interests of truth, sacrifice even what is dear to us. Asked what loss he would suffer by telling lies, he replied: "No one will believe me when I tell the truth." He was himself, like Socrates, charged with impiety and fled to Chalcis, "to save the Athenians from committing a second crime against philosophy." (What would he have thought of an Index of Prohibited Books?) It would be difficult to over-estimate the value which Epicurus set upon truth, the great emancipator from fear, and especially from the fear of the future terrors threatened by the popular religious cults.

For the Romans speculative philosophy had but little attraction and the observance of religious formalities was rather part of their duty to the State than an expression of personal devotion. Lucretius and



Virgil, however, were deeply influenced by Epicurus, and both saw civilized life as an advance from small beginnings and as the gradual outcome of research, along purely physical lines, into all Nature's processes. In the best period of the Republic the "good faith" of the average man probably counted for more than it has ever counted for since in Europe.

We find ourselves in a different world when the moral ideals and traditions, in which the spirit of fearless investigation constituted an important element, were displaced by the rigid orthodoxy of a triumphant Christianity. The fear of inquiry, and the forcible suppression of whatever threatened the authority of the new religion, which are nothing but passive forms of lying, ultimately assumed a character not previously known to history. Error had, of course, existed long before "the faith once delivered to the saints" set out to conquer the world, illusion and falsehood had existed; but for centuries Europe has been dominated by a Consecrated Lie. Where is there anything in the New Testament or in any of the Church Fathers even remotely corresponding to the highest Greek ideals of truth? How often we Free-thinkers are told that our morality, if it exists at all, is due to the influence of Christian environment! As far as the subject of this article is concerned, we might reply that the very opposite represents the facts of the case. Even to-day Christianity is exerting its age-long pernicious influence in fostering hypocrisy. Throughout the centuries under Christian sway a large part of our ethical development has consisted of the efforts made by persecuted Free-thinkers, that is, of men and women who led the revolt against Christianity's claims to authority, to regain that spirit of free inquiry which had once marked part of humanity's achievement, and pointed the way, however imperfectly, to a natural system of ethics such as Spencer no doubt had in mind when he said: "Morality is essentially one with physical truth" (*Social Statics*, 1851, p. 436). Let me quote a short extract from John Stuart Mill's posthumous essay on *The Utility of Religion* (1874, p. 72). He indicts the baneful influence of Christianity on the thought of his day in words which are as true as they are unambiguous: "The whole of the prevalent metaphysics of the present century is one tissue of suborned evidence in favour of religion; often of Deism only, but in any case involving a misapplication of noble impulses and speculative capacities, among the most deplorable of those wretched wastes of human faculties which make us wonder that enough is left to keep mankind progressive, at however slow a pace."

To the impartial critic the sinuous course of Christian apologetic, when seen at its worst, can hardly fail to appear as almost the last word in the history of intellectual dishonesty. But even at its best it is an unconvincing record of special pleading. As De Quincey neatly remarked of Paley: "He prescribes for the consciences of both universities." We find, too, that reward of a purely material kind has provided stimulus to the efforts put forth from time to time to maintain the true faith. The Boyle, Bampton, Bridgewater, Baird, Gifford, Hulsean and other trusts all provided funds to endow lectures or pay for theses which started with the assumption that Christianity or theism was true, and that it was a truth well worth defending. Later on I hope to deal at length with some of these masterpieces of apologetics made to order.

Any attempt to impose conclusions in this way is disastrous to the truth-seeking spirit. The attitude of science, and of all history that deserves the name, is exactly the reverse. Huxley, writing in 1871, said that Darwin's "unswerving truthfulness" was more strikingly noticeable than "even the surprising fer-

tility of his inventive genius." Was any such tribute ever paid to a Christian theologian? He demands reverence even in those who discuss the exorcism of devils, or who reject the dogma of eternal punishment.

What Professor Goldwin Smith once called "the subtle and refined unveracity" of those clerics who remain in the church and take its emoluments, after discarding most of its fundamental doctrines, has simply become a by-word. It no longer raises a passing protest from Christians or anybody else. Robert Elsmere, tortured by pangs of conscience, probably do not exist in large numbers inside the church now; but if there are any it would be interesting to have Dean Inge's or Bishop Barnes' opinion of them.

Clericalism and orthodoxy, with their widespread implications, have become so entwined with politics, with education, and with the social proprieties, that hardly a single department of modern life is unaffected by a false sense of values. Our representative institutions, of which we used to boast so much, are falling into disrepute, partly because, on the one hand, the religious denominations are trying to control them for sectarian purposes, and, on the other, Members of Parliament are pandering to any organization that threatens to withhold a sprinkling of votes. A traditionally dishonest device of religious propaganda deserves mention here. When the pastor and his flock dislike some proposal or tendency on one ground they frequently choose quite another for attacking it, because the latter is more likely to appeal to popular prejudice. The stock instance is the moral disaster to be anticipated from secular education. Another instance of the same device was noticeable recently when the agitation was on foot for Sunday games in the parks, and the Sabbatarians loudly proclaimed that extra men would be employed. Inquiry showed that the London County Council, which was already employing about four thousand men on Sunday, would require forty-four extra if the games were allowed.

Let us glance at a wider field. European diplomacy will continue to be a network of falsehood and intrigue until we realize seriously that we cannot have goodwill abroad on a basis of lies at home. Again and again when Turkish atrocities were reported from Armenia, it was declared that the "conscience of Christian Europe" revolted at the news. Where was that conscience at the time of Crusades, at the time of the Thirty Years' War, or in August, 1914?

But why want the truth at all? To answer that question fully I should perhaps have to write two whole chapters, one in the history of religion and the other in the history of science. Let Christians ask the question frankly of each other. Roman Catholics accuse Protestants of serious misrepresentation, while the latter are constantly asserting that the Roman Catholic Church has absorbed superstitious elements from Paganism, and that her claims to exclusive spiritual authority are well calculated to create the conditions of culture which we find wherever she has undisputed power. Both alike are prepared to malign and misrepresent the Free-thinker, his work, and his character. A phrase current nowadays in certain circles is "ideals of culture." If those who use it mean anything at all they must, I presume, have in mind the type of men and women they expect their ideals to produce. Only by a perversion of terms can any philosophy of life which denies the right to examine the basis on which belief rests, and to question the authority of all creeds, ancient and modern, be said to include "culture." In one respect, however, the outlook is by no means hopeless. At our universities there is a growing reluctance on the part of undergraduates to take holy orders, and those who do take them are by no means "the pick of the bunch."

A. D. McLAREN,



## Science and Metaphysics.

THE quest of Metaphysics is the quest for pure being or substance (Monism) or substances (Pluralism). It is the search for principles self-existent.

Can science help? Let us take something dealt with in science. Is water self-existent? No, it can be reduced to Hydrogen and Oxygen. Are they fundamental? Are their atoms ultimate? No, they are arrangements of widely separated electrons and protons. Do they strike bedrock, or are they capable of analysis? Is there anything still lower? Yes, for they are relatively stabilized charges of electricity. Electricity, then; is that as far as we can go? It would appear so, at present. The question "what" can here be applied only once. It is not "what is electricity?" but "what is that"; answer, electricity. But then Sir O. Lodge may want to tell us electricity is a nuclei of strain in the ether, only to be pipped at the post by some unorthodox Einsteinian who regards ether as a warping of space in one of its dimensions.

Science is at present without a settled name for self-existence. It acknowledges its datum without, however, fully comprehending what it is. As with the Greeks of old, "Give us existence, and we can explain the world."

It would seem, then, that both science and Metaphysics are after the same thing—substance. Up to a point, they are. But whereas science is content to find and name substance, the Metaphysician goes further. He must describe its intrinsic character, and formulate a theory of its behaviour, and of its relationship with other principles of existence, if any.

A few illustrations may keep us in touch with several eminent thinkers on substance. Prof. Lenzen

(U.S.A.) says, we know it exists, yet its intrinsic nature is problematic and can be left to Metaphysics (*Mind*, quarterly). All riddles, said Haeckel, are traced back to the problem of substance, which, he declared somewhat in scorn, can be left to Metaphysics. Dühring spoke of nature as a totality of existences which empty backward into a primordial state, and flow forward into the unlimited; he added, very truly, that the primordial state left traces which elude the changing play of events. It is Spencer's

"inscrutable existence which science in the last resort is compelled to recognize as unreached by its deepest analysis." Spencer named this underlying substratum the Unknowable. "It is impossible," he

maintained, "to avoid making the assumption of self-existence somewhere," something must first be accepted without proof, and all theories postulate it.

Mr. Chapman Cohen has spoken of it as the "raw material of phenomena." Prof. Whitehead calls it a "metaphysical presupposition," or "unexplored remainder," H. G. Wells a "primary unanalysable"

Lenzen, an "insoluble residue." Even Comte, the great sceptic in Metaphysics, did not deny an original datum. He merely ignored its pursuit as a waste of time.

Call it what we will, it is the subject matter for Metaphysics. Let us suppose that science finally decided upon its lowest denominator. Would that be final? It would—for us Realists, because we are such sensible people, but it would not dispose of those silly Idealists. They can still come along and argue in this manner: "Your lowest term, your ultimate constituent of matter, contains Energy. Energy involves

Action. Action points to Intelligence. Intelligence implies Mind. Ergo, substance in the last resort is mind; self-existent mind is God, the universe's child. Q.E.D."

Nor does this depart from concrete example. The reader may recall how in *The Nature of the Physical*

*World*, Prof. Eddington wrote that science deals with symbols and pointer-readings, and need not probe into the nature of that which is being symbolized or pointed to. Concerned with phenomena, it cannot gain access to the noumenon behind. The problem of an elephant sliding down a hill tells us nothing about the elephant and the hill. It merely says what happens when any mass slides down any 60° slope. The physical world is based on "measure groups resting on a shadowy background outside the scope of physics," and to illustrate he drew us a pretty diagram in which matter is traced round in the following manner: Matter—taken from stress—related to potential—derived from the interval—measured by the scale—made from matter . . . known by Mr. X, so that it looked as though the ultimate principle, after all, was the mind of Mr. X. Hence he chose to call substance "mind-stuff." Mind is known directly; all else is inference; an attitude bearing kinship with Descartes' epoch-making, "I think, Therefore I am."

So that when science has traced the "thing" back to its last hiding-place there still remains the question of its intrinsic nature, and its relationship with other principles, if any. That lets in the Metaphysician. The physicist does all he can, and then he knocks off duty. He lays down his tools, for he has none with which to tackle the metaphysical remainder. To call it electricity or ether is to give a name to the problem, not to solve it. The metaphysician comes on the scene. If he is efficient he will remember that he has the results of science at his disposal. Too often he forgets that, and so we get our celebrated failures. He may say substance is spiritual, or a mind-eject, or a tool in the hand of some transcendental, and if he does the departmental physicist can only shrug his shoulders. Or the latter may continue with the problem himself; he may doff the overhauls of the scientist and don the gown of the philosopher. Unfortunately, however, too few of our efficient scientists are complete scientific thinkers, and as a result we get our Eddingtons and Jeans and Thomsons.

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Only through a working relationship with science can Metaphysics establish itself as a valid study, and were it not for the fact that the term is not so widely circulated, I should have preferred Lewis's *Metaphysics*. Lewis' plea was for a metaphysics based on science, a suggestion valuable and pregnant.

Let us see how Metaphysics, so conceived, fits into its place within the broader study, Philosophy. Broadly speaking there are three types of question man can ask about the universe, what? how? and why? all others will be subsumed in them. The question how? will be answered in analysis, and is the work of science. The question what? will call for linguistic description, and will be treated (a) by Physics (giving a noun to substance), (b) by Language (describing the phenomena born in the behaviour of substance), and (c) by Metaphysics (giving adjectives to substance). The question why? is treated in Teleology. How? demands analysis, what, description, and why? purposive explanation.

Typical answers might be: What? Man crossing road. How? Physiological functioning. Why? To get to tobaccoist's.

Asking for as much licence as was allowed Comte in his law of three stages, let us suggest how these questions have been treated anthropologically. First, then, the savage asked why, then the Metaphysician wanted to know what, and finally the scientist inquired how.

Take the savage's idea of thunder: "The mighty one above thunders, for he is angry." This follows "why?" Consider the Metaphysician's theory of



existence: "It is a colony of monads"; "It is the self-manifestation of the Absolute," etc. This follows "what?"

They failed to get us any further. And then the scientist spoke. He answered with success the question "how?" and in doing so he developed the hypothesis of Determinism.

That has been the only fruitful inquiry, and I think the reason for that is, that it should have preceded the others. Historically the order has been, why, what, how. For philosophical purposes it should be how, what, why. Metaphysics before science was futile, and fully merited Comte's disparagement. Metaphysics in 1931, founded on science, can be made a valid field of investigation. Before we can say *what* adjectives can be applied to substance (*e.g.*, mental, active, creative, controlled, inoculated, unintelligent, organic, purposive, monadic, pro-human, anti-human) we have to see *how* it behaves (*i.e.*, have to consult science.) We have no direct experience of it; only a study of the process will give us the clue to that which is undergoing the process.

Have we enough scientific data to work with? Yes; speculation need not wait till experience is exhausted. Because we must not build without bricks, are we then to leave those we have lying idle? We must not be over-dogmatic, but we *cannot* be completely sceptical. Each voluntary action involves belief in something. We are testing hypotheses almost every minute of our lives.

Shall we pin our faith to "common sense"? Not entirely so, for commonsense beliefs, arising, it is held, from biological needs, are biassed by the struggle for existence. The philosopher detaches himself from the struggle and sits aloft. Sometimes the crowd below laughs at him, and if there is any justification for their scoffing the philosopher is certainly to blame, for not making the toiling plane of everyday life the material, for thought the moment the philosopher loses touch with everyday life, the moment he embarks on a lonesome journey into the dreamland of speculation, he ceases to be a philosopher. He becomes a poet. Plato was such. But if he takes his stand firmly on science, and abandons any speculation incapable of practical test, he can worthily supplement the work of the sciences. It is one and the same thing we study in science and in philosophy; the distinction lies wholly in method, and the core of philosophy is metaphysics (Alexander and McTaggart even identify the terms).

Can any good come of metaphysical inquiry? Or shall we be content with what the science tell us? If you adopt the latter course you renounce Metaphysics, which is quite all right if everyone else will do the same. But they won't. The average professional philosopher clings to his metaphysics like the parson clings to his God; it is all part of the trade. Some ply it with the avowed intention of backing up the crumbling structures of religion. Therefore I say—and here is my theme in a nutshell—let us play them at their own game. Let us advance, take their territory, and establish Materialism in the realm of Metaphysics, properly conceived. This does not imply a Metaphysical Materialism, but an Emergent Materialism with a metaphysical tenet.

What has Materialism to gain from Metaphysics? The traditional reply is "Nothing." Let us leave them with their knots and rables. Why should we bother to untie them?" and I have often wondered whether the failure of Metaphysics has been taken for the failure of Materialism. And so I suggest that instead of running away from Metaphysics, instead of leaving it to men who make a sad muddle of it, let us interest ourselves in it for the sake of driving out false theories.

A positive theory will then supplement our somewhat negative criticism; a working conception to replace unpractical speculation.

G. H. TAYLOR.

## Your Gramophone.

MANY lovers of music after buying a gramophone think that nothing else remains to be done except to buy needles and records from time to time.

In addition, however, it is essential to keep the machine in order, partly by treating it gently and partly by calling in a gramophone doctor.

Most makers supply directions for oiling and greasing machines, but gramophone users should remember that the services of an expert should be called in at least every six months.

In my own case I have a contract with a local firm, which sends a mechanic every six months, who overhauls and adjusts my machine, and I am thus assured of it being always in good repair.

### SOME NEW RECORDS.

Among the recent records there are many worthy of special mention, but space in the *Freethinker* is not elastic, and so only a few of particular interest can be dealt with.

First of all dance records.

The following are all good: "You're lucky to me," and "Memories of you," on Sterno 671, and "Yours and Mine," and "Bells of Normandy," on Sterno 672, both played by Bertini and his Band.

Nat Star and his orchestra on Sterno 673 and 685, is even better, particularly in "Share my umbrella," which has much more vigour in its singing than most other dance records.

Despite the excellence of these tunes, I still think that the majority of dance records would be better without the vocal refrain for the words are usually so sloppy.

Sterno 175, which has on one side Jan Ralfini and his band, in a version of the "Peanut Vendor," that curious thing which has suddenly become all the rage, is worth getting if only to class it among the freaks.

Piccadilly have some good dance tunes too this month. 752 contains "We're friends again," and "When it's Sunset on the Nile"; 751 has "Dreaming of my Indiana Sweetheart," and that lively tune "Tap your Feet"; 753 is "Shovel up your troubles," and "Egyptian Ella"; 754 is "Walking Love's Lane Alone," and "Alone and Afraid"; 749 is "Girl of a Million Dreams," and "Hello Beautiful," while 750 is another version of "Bells of Normandy," and the "Hindu Melody" from Jack o'Lantern.

Jack Hylton and his Orchestra in "Hurt," and the "Wedding of the Garden Insects," where "Miss Butterfly gets married to the guy that lives inside the apple tree" is an H.M.V. record (No. B 5995) well worth buying.

I do not like Pat O'Rourke's Irish Singers on Piccadilly 746 in their "Gems of Erin," for eight songs on two sides of a ten inches record makes a too patchy whole. I should like to hear them produce a selection of Gems of Erin on several records, singing each song in full.

Harrington and Moore in "Sunshine Charlie" (Piccadilly 747) pay a well deserved tribute to Chaplin, who can "bring joy to lips so badly in need of a smile." It might be a good idea to buy this record for a Christian friend!

Jerry Hoey and his band on Piccadilly 742 take us back many years in their "Good Old Time Songs," which include "Sweet Genevieve," "Just Like the Ivy," "The sunshine of your smile," and others. Although strictly a dance record Sterno 670 Nat Star and his orchestra in "Drink, Brothers Drink," appeals to me most as a song, for it is a real cheery song full of friendliness and good spirit, while "Sing Holly! go whistle! Hey hey!" on the other side is just the kind of thing we want to hear and sing in these hard times.

The Chapels Royal Sextet singing "Sweet and Low,"



and "Who will O'er the Downs with me," on H.M.V. B 3759, is a masterpiece of unaccompanied singing.

Of novelty records three are interesting. One of these is Sterno 681, on which Cuvclier shows what can be done with a piano accordion, and the others are Piccadilly 748 and H.M.V. B 3823, on both sides of which are tunes played on a musical saw.

This curious instrument will not appeal to everyone, in my own household we are sharply divided as to whether the records are delightful or whether the sounds produced are merely noise.

Try them yourselves and see. Freethinkers who, above all people, attempt to value material things at a true estimate may smile grimly when they notice the praise bestowed upon Schubert, and when they remember that his MSS. were sold for 8s. 6d. The world has tried to make amends since then, but anyone hearing Frank Cantell playing the Adagio in A Major from Octet on Piccadilly 744, and Kreisler playing Rosamunde (Ballet Music) on H.M.V. D.A. 1137 will find it difficult to understand a world which ever failed to appreciate Schubert.

If great music is God-inspired, as certain sentimental parsons would have us believe, then it is strange that God nearly allowed "The Blue Danube Waltz" to go to the laundry on a shirt cuff where Strauss had written it. We can enjoy the waltz now on H.M.V. B 3726 as played by Marek Weber and his orchestra. On the other side is the almost equally famous Lehar waltz "Gold and Silver."

Even at the risk of exceeding the space allowed me I must recommend two twelve-inch records, both H.M.V. One of these is No. C 2196, and is a selection from German's "Merrie England," played by the New Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Dr. Malcolm Sargent. England never was Merrie, but we can still enjoy the tunes, particularly the Rustic Dance, the Jig and the Hornpipe.

The other is H.M.V. D 1934, upon which the London Symphony Orchestra, under Albert Coates have recorded Rimsky Korsakov's "Cortege des Nobles," and Moussorgsky's "Gopak."

Moussorgsky's music has in it the real wild colourful spirit of the Russian people, and "Gopak," or "The Fair at Sorotchinsk" is as typical as anything he ever wrote.

Korsakov was famous for his power of giving the effect of the magic of the Orient and in this "Cortege des Nobles" he has a lovely stately picture. The orchestra renders the music in a murmur which would have pleased the hearts of the composers.

BAY.

## Acid Drops.

With regard to the recent earthquake, an important pronouncement comes from the well known clergyman, the Rev. Dimsdale Young. He says he is a firm believer in the second coming of Christ, and notes that one of the indications of his approach is the occurrence of earthquakes. He agrees there is a scientific explanation of earthquakes, but "I prefer to hold the theological view." Now, if we had not the Christian Church we should be unable to so easily place our hands on living specimens of the Stone Age. The estimated cost of an institution in which these specimens might be preserved ought to be set against the existing expense of the Christian Church.

"God," says the Pope, "is with the Vatican in this controversy." The reference is, of course, to the quarrel with Mussolini. We do not suppose the assurance will seriously trouble Mussolini. God has so often taken the wrong side in controversy, that he may well have backed the wrong horse on this occasion.

Apropos of the Bible Society's decreased sale of Bibles in England last year, the *Methodist Recorder* asks: "Is the Bible as widely read to-day as forty years ago? And has it for the rising generation the authority and supremacy in the guidance of thought and conduct which it possessed for our fathers?" This elicits the following statement from a Sheffield reader:—

From my observation and enquiries I should answer decidedly in the negative; for I am afraid many of our people never open the Bible at all; and, like the good custom of following the reading of the Scriptures in our services from our own Bibles, which has almost gone out of use, so the daily reading and time for meditation on it has become less of a customary practice. Many say they have no time. Is it not rather they have no inclination?

Another reader declares that among Methodists the old custom of morning and evening family worship, of which Bible-reading was an essential part, is declining. One result of this is that the younger Methodists have very little intimate acquaintance with the Bible. He adds that, whereas the Bible used to be taught as the true Word of God, to-day the idea of any special divine inspiration seems to be gradually disappearing, and its divine authority questioned.

For our part, we believe that a similar situation obtains among other denominations. The Bible may be called the world's "best seller," but the parsons can extract precious little comfort from the statement, while they know that the Bible is to a great extent not read. In future the Bible Society might as well shelve its "best seller" sales' talk, and—for honesty's sake—be content to affirm that the Bible is the book most widely and largely distributed.

Banknotes, declares a lawyer, should be made fire-proof. But even if they were, there is still the problem of how a wealthy parson can get them translated to the ultimate destination of those who hoard up treasure on earth.

The *Evening Standard*, in explaining a marvellous contrivance to catapult a bombing machine into the air, gives the following consoling information to its readers:—

During war it will be possible with this catapult for machines to be taken to any small plot of ground and from there launched without trouble into the air.

One of these days there might be the launching of a bit of common sense on the cause of war, but, in the nature of things, many newspaper editors could not be expected to take part in it. It would need considerable education of the public, and meanwhile there is circulation to be considered.

"That pestilential death watch beetle"—the phrase is a religious journal's—is causing more trouble and expense as regards the roof beams of Wesley's Chapel. Presuming that God specially created the beetle for doing damage to roof beams, we may suggest that our friend's epithet, "pestilential," savours of the blasphemous. As the Wesleyan's special stand-by for all evils is prayer, what about a nice one concerning the beetle? Something like this ought to do: "O Lord, please remove your pestilential beetle; it is a darn nuisance to those who love you."

"Historicus," a writer in a Methodist paper, has been writing his reminiscences, in the course of which he mentions one of the most striking changes occurring in his lifetime. This is that whereas, in his boyhood many people professed themselves Republicans, to-day, "There are practically no Republicans left in the British Isles." On the contrary, there are to-day in the British Isles more people than ever who disbelieve in the superstition of monarchy. "Historicus" appears to have overlooked the fact that there are quite a few adherents of a certain political creed which has no use for a monarchy.

After all the talk about a religious revival, one cannot help being amused at some pious journals' recent attempts to cheer up their readers. The other week a Wesleyan editor admitted that this is a difficult time for the churches, and he consoles himself with the thought that it has never been easy for the Church to make headway, and the progress of the Church has never been dependent on favourable conditions. He also declares that there are many apathetic and discouraged Christian workers. And presumably the following is for their benefit: "When the Church loses heart it loses almost everything; for it means the loss of courage, of faith, and



of hope." So, of course, the best thing to do is to adopt the Boy Scouts' trick—whistle to keep up your courage! Meanwhile, what is the starting price—as the bookies say—of that noble horse "Religious Revival" in the World Redemption race?

A writer in a newspaper says:—

Whatever may be said about the bigotry of the Churches in the past, religion did hold out some hope for mankind. This was a valuable aid in the trials and troubles of mortal life.

The truth of the matter is that religion served merely as a dope. It taught mankind to regard "the trials and troubles of mortal life" as punishment either for "original sin," or for present wrong-doing, and it bred resignation to the alleged "will of God." It was a dope-making people resigned to preventable wrongs and to evils which could have been either prevented, removed, or mitigated. Worse still, it stifled all enquiry concerning causes, and hindered the quest for remedies. What an invaluable aid to mankind this Christian narcotic has been!

During a discussion on Sunday cinemas in a pious contemporary, a question asked by a reader is: "To what extent can Christian people utilize legislation in winning the world for Christ?" Obviously, the rabid Sabbatarian has only one answer to that. A more pertinent question for him is: "Has the religious bigot any right to compel, by means of legislation, other people to conform to his peculiar opinions and prejudices?"

Another reader's view is:—

Let us mind our own business . . . Invoking the secular arm is not the work of the Church; we are much too fallible in our judgment to exercise that power.

Some Christians, it seems, are at last acquiring modesty and humility—which is a very welcome change for the better. The unnaturalness of it is, however, rather startling. Needless to say, the innovation has its dangerous side, as most parsons will perceive. Much of the power of the Church is derived from the bigotry and intolerance of its adherents. But modesty and humility are the worst kind of manure for nurturing the ancient Christian virtues of bigotry and intolerance on which so much religious enthusiasm depends.

Two noble men, Canon E. B. Spurgin and the Rev. T. Underhill, a short while ago voluntarily reduced their salaries in order to ease the finances of their church at Sidecup. The altruistic spirit of these gentlemen deserves a wider field to be exercised in. For instance, they might try to ease the financial burden of British taxpayers by insisting that all churches and chapels should pay rates and taxes the same as other property.

A bright idea of a weekly journal is: "Could we not stop fiction for ten years? Would it not be better, instead of feeding the imagination of the world with the imagination of a few writers, to feed it with facts?" Well, how about persuading our popular newspapers and weekly journals to make a start in this direction? And what about suspending the circulation of the Holy Bible, which is feeding the imagination of the world with crude superstitions, pornographic tit-bits, fantastic notions, and primitive philosophy salvaged from uncivilized and pre-scientific eras?

The Dutch Reformed Church (South Africa) has decided to have no fooling, so far as religious doctrines are concerned. The *Natal Mercury* for May 7 reports the following decisions arrived at by the Synod, and which Ministers are to be compelled to sign:—

- (1) That the Bible is God's word.
- (2) That the Bible in all its parts is inspired by God, and is therefore in all its parts infallible.
- (3) That the miracles of the Bible cannot be explained by human reason, and must be accepted with childlike faith.
- (4) That the story of the creation and the fall of man as contained in Genesis is infallible and inspired.
- (5) That the history as set forth in the Old Testament itself must be maintained against the evolution theory of higher criticism.

(6) That Jesus Christ is, not only in the ethical sense holy and without sin, but that He is also intellectually without mistakes, untruth and deceit.

(7) That the teaching of Jesus about Moses as the writer of the Pentateuch, about Jonah and the whale, about David as author of Psalm 110, about the whole Scripture, is infallible.

A resolution was adopted to the effect that, before the calling of a Minister, the Article of the Law embodying what the Church expected from its ministers with regard to the theological views of the Church in the Orange Free State, as adopted in the foregoing seven points, should be read in a meeting of the Church and sent to the minister called, to be signed by him.

And that's that!

In *Everyman* a writer says of Sir John Reith:—

From The Manse, Reith gets that deep religious conviction to which is ultimately due the Daily Services, the Sunday Evening Services, and the Epilogues which have meant so much to many millions, particularly the sick and the old.

It is due also to the manse that there is no consideration shown to the wishes of millions of non-pious listeners, who want an alternative programme to the pious stuff and the hours of Sacred Silence on Sunday. Such a programme would mean much to many more millions who are not religiously inclined—particularly the sick and old, who are now left with hours of boredom on Sunday. This lack of consideration for others, one may add, is a characteristic of the Christian. It reveals itself in directions other than the wireless. The Christian doesn't want Sunday games and amusements, and so does his worst to prevent other people from enjoying them.

Dr. Percy Dearmer suggests (in the *Church of England Newspaper*) that the Churches should launch a crusade for "clean" films in the cinemas. The Churches, he declares, "are the natural guardians of the higher interests of the nation." He adds: "Formerly the moral influence of religion was largely discounted by an unreasoning Puritanism which greatly weakened its power. With our recently acquired philosophy of aesthetics, that unethetical narrowness has almost passed away." We may as well add that the "unreasoning Puritanism" derived its inspiration from the Holy Bible, but the recently acquired philosophy of aesthetics—which has broadened religious minds—is a gift from the secular world. We wonder why our up-to-date Christians are so loath to acknowledge the source of the useful presents they have accepted from "the world, the flesh, and the devil." The omission is very unethetical, although quite Christian.

There are numerous conundrums in life, and the solution of most of them can be supplied by the daily papers. A perplexed reader in Somerset required of the *Daily Mail* a remedy for bats in Church, and knew that she could rely on the sapience of that wonderful newspaper for an answer. An obliging reader came along with the suggestion that the Church should be smoked with the brown paper, and the bats killed as they came out through the doorway. Our suggestion, for what it is worth, is, that the church committee approach Mr. Harry Tate for the use of his wonderful mouse-trap, which could be adjusted for the purpose; the congregation should also be reminded that Noah is to blame for taking a pair of bats in the ark.

A parson says: "To brother all the souls on earth—this is what we are Christians for." If the historical accounts of the bloodthirsty squabbles between Christians are any sort of guide, this parson's statement must be quite a new discovery. We presume it would be inexpedient to mention that there is so much brotherliness among Christians that those of one sect refuse to be buried in the "consecrated" ground of another sect. Again, one gang of brothers in Christ refuse to allow another gang of brothers to join them at the magic table and share the "sacred" bread and wine.



TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A. FOX.—Much obliged for cuttings.  
 S. HILSON.—The interest derived by the Church from investments in Government stock cannot be called money voted from the Government, although if the Church paid rates and taxes as do other people and institutions, there would not be so much for investment.  
 D. A. WALKER (Johannesburg).—Pleased to have the warm appreciation of a recent subscriber to the *Freethinker*, and to add one more to our many South African readers. It is almost time something in the nature of a *Freethinker* Fellowship was formed.  
 F.N.B.—Received and shall appear. Thanks.  
 T. PUZEY (Johannesburg).—Shall be very pleased to meet your friend when he visits England.  
 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.  
 The National Secular Society's Office is at 62 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.  
 When the services of the National Secular Society in connection 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.

A second edition of Mr. Cohen's *God and the Universe* is now on sale. The first edition was published at the end of February, and its sale has been very gratifying to all concerned. It is a book that should do much to place the approach to religion set forth by Sir James Jeans and Professor Eddington in their proper light, and to expose the nature of the coquetting with "religion" by Professor Julian Huxley. Every Freethinker should have a copy, and those who already have one might do worse than present one to an intelligent Christian friend.

Several Freethinkers in Birkenhead are desirous of forming a Branch of the N.S.S. There are a large number of Freethinkers in that district, and those who care to join should write to Mr. Ronald H. S. Standfast, of 24 Circular Road, Birkenhead. Mr. Standfast tells us that he and others wish to surprise their Christian friends, and they will do so if local Freethinkers gather round. We invite them to get together at once and so get into trim for the winter.

Birkenhead, by the way, has just decided to have Sunday Golf in the New Arrows Park Municipal Golf Course. The *Liverpool Evening Express* calls it a triumph for common sense. It would be another triumph for common sense if Birkenhead possessed a strong fighting Branch of the N.S.S.

The Conway Memorial lecturer for this year was Professor J. W. Gregory, and in his *Race as a Political Factor* (Watts & Co., ls.) there is provided material for some very strenuous and profitable discussion. Whether "race" exists as an indestructible biological, and therefore, a permanent sociological fact or not, it certainly exists as a psychological one, unquestionably dominating the political and sociological thinking of large numbers. For our own part, we find such terms as "pure race," "superior race," and "inferior race," very unenlightening, and with most writers very confusing. Explaining sociological phenomena in terms of race is like explaining human nature in terms of "instinct." What are termed racial qualities may be more satisfactorily explained in terms of cultural traditions and the perpetuations of institutions, than as the products of "race." And when we come to the question of social improvements "race" gives us no help whatever. Moreover it is very difficult to establish the existence of a so-called "pure

race," that has reached a great degree of culture. Hybrids appear to rank highest in this respect. In this direction we think the weakness of Professor Gregory's lecture is that he looks at the subject too much from the point of view of the biologist, and pays too little attention to other considerations. But the lecture, because of the opposition it may rouse in the mind of the informed reader is the more important on that account.

Mr. J. T. Brighton has been having an exciting time in Durham, where he has been giving occasional lectures in the Market Place. Christian courage in Durham appears to be true to type, and finding their numbers ran into hundreds, whilst there were but two Freethinkers, the assembled Christians broke into hooliganism, and a deal of rowdyism followed. Mr. Brighton delivered his lecture in spasms, answered questions, and with his companion was escorted to the bus by a howling mob.

We are not surprised to know that the ringleaders of the rowdyism were theological students, who as the future occupants of pulpits, and teachers of morality gave ample demonstration of their qualifications. Incidentally the handling of the case for Free Speech by the authorities appears to be very strange, and the Executive of the N.S.S. is taking the matter up. We prefer not to say anything further for the moment.

The following letter was sent to the *News-Chronicle*—with the usual result:—

PEACE SUNDAY.

To the Editor of the *News-Chronicle*.

Sir,—As a regular reader of yours, who is a Liberal in every sense of the word, I am "fed up" with the obtrusive piety of this journal in recent days. As you will doubtless not be able to find room for this letter I am sending a copy of it to what is probably the only journal in London in which it is likely to appear. The Churches (or some of them) have had a Peace Sunday for years. But it does not seem to have avoided the necessity for secular efforts, like your own, on behalf of Peace. You now appeal to the Churches, who, in all nations, invoked the God of Battles during the Great War, and presumably, all got as much or as little of his attention to their claims on his partiality as any sane person might have expected. There are many Liberals who support the League of Nations and other Liberal causes who are not, and do not wish to be mistaken for, Christians. And the Covenant of the League itself contains no reference to the Deity: most of those who signed it not being in the habit of referring the affairs of mankind to any but human tribunals. If the Churches had ever believed in the teaching—the admitted and unmistakable teaching—of the second person of their blessed trinity, neither the Great War, nor any of the wars that have scourged mankind for at least 1,000 years would have been possible. But wars were never more frequent than in the "ages of faith." "Peace Sunday" has not even the "news value" of being new, and it will only help to revive, what happily has been dying lately, Europe's contempt for British "hypocrisy." The man in the street is just as contemptuous of it, and so he will be while you print in the same issue sob stuff about the Churches, and that priceless account of the priggish Bishop of London nosing into dirty books which he apparently reads more and talks more about than most decent citizens who do not go to church. On the man in the street all Liberal ideas must more and more depend for their proper place in our counsels and in those of the world.

Yours etc.,  
 ALBERT C. WHITE.

Mr. G. Whitehead reports well attended meetings at Birmingham. The local Branch of the N.S.S. gave active co-operation, which is always a valuable asset towards success. Starting from to-day (Sunday) Mr. Whitehead will be lecturing each evening until Friday in Bolton. There also the local Branch of the N.S.S. will assist.

We are asked to announce that a "meet" of Lancashire Freethinkers at Towneley Hall, Burnley, Sunday, June 21 Manchester members and friends meet at Lower Mosley Street Bus Station for Burnley Bus via Rochdale and Todmorden. Return



Buses every hour. A short ramble over the hills will be arranged for those who wish to leave the Bus at Cornholme. All Lancashire "Saints" invited. Teas and refreshment can be bought at Towneley Hall, one of the best preserved castles in England, now the property of the Burnley Corporation. Return fare from Manchester 3s. 3d. An open-air meeting might be arranged by the Burnley friends in the evening with Mr. Clayton as speaker.

Mr. E. C. Ashworth informs us that a Secularist group has been formed at Richmond, Surrey. Why not a Branch of the N.S.S.? Address 17 Onslow Road, Richmond, Surrey.

We have to acknowledge 5s. from Mr. J. Lane to be used in advertising the *Freethinker*.

## More Money for Mugs.

THERE is one thing for which religious people have to be thankful in these more or less enlightened days, and that is the slowly but surely decreasing influence of religion. It is, of course, not to be expected that religious propagandists—priests, presbyters, pastors and the like—should exhibit any great joy at this fact, for their bread and butter depends upon keeping their supporters in ignorance of the true facts of religion. But it is quite certain that a large proportion of clerics to-day would not only be much less secure in the enjoyment of their livings, but that many of them would be subjected to penalties, whose very existence was a direct consequence of religious teaching, and whose abolition was entirely due to the spread of religious indifference.

For the decline of bigotry and for all the other benefits which Freethought has brought in its wake, the clergy still lyingly claim the credit. And so ignorant are most people in regard to the real causes of their present "liberty of conscience," that the bad work of religious teaching still goes on, and there are plenty of rich and well-to-do fools who pay to keep it going. If only they could be brought to know the true facts, what a heap of injustice and irrationality might be avoided!

It is seldom that the serious enquirer gets the opportunity of discovering the true facts of religion. Those who have inside information are the least willing to divulge it. A minority, it may be, are only acquainted with a fraction of the truth; but those who know more than this have a rooted aversion to admitting the whole truth to their own consciences. The remainder, who do know all the facts, also know that if these should ever become general knowledge, it would result in an immediate and permanent collapse of the temporal power which they so hypocritically belittle and so earnestly strive to maintain. There is more misery and evil to be laid at the door of religion than the most careful and diligent research is ever likely to disclose. But however cunningly concealed, the truth continues to become known by degrees.

Apart from the evils for which religion has been responsible, there are other facts of a statistical nature which, harmless though they might seem to be, are just as difficult to discover. Mr. Joseph McCabe, in his *Myths of Religious Statistics* (Little Blue Book, No. 365), has done about as much as any man can do in a limited space to give the true figures in regard to the numbers professing the different religions. Occasionally further figures chance to leak out, and without exception they all go to prove the truth of his findings. Last May, for example, in an article under a similar heading to this one, I was able to give readers a few facts culled from the 1929 yearly report of the Ordination Candidates Training Fund. And

this year I am again in the same fortunate position in regard to the report for 1930.

This fund was started "to provide training for candidates of Evangelical views" for ordination in the Anglican church. "Our men," says the Secretary, "are very carefully chosen from a large number of applicants. They are . . . staunch Conservative Evangelicals." From this and other remarks concerning Modernists and Anglo-Catholics, it is clear that the prerequisite in a candidate is not intelligence or common-sense or open-mindedness, but a definite religious bias of a specific sort. In other words sectarianism is tactfully admitted to be an essential.

What the actual "large number" of applicants is we are left to guess. But in view of the statement that "a man offering to them (the Anglo-Catholics) can go right through to ordination without any expense," and that "with so many free grants to-day it is easy for unsuitable men to get ordained," one might expect rather more than 600 ordinations in one year for the whole Anglican church. Yet that is the figure given. In addition to this we are told that "last year the deaths among the clergy exceeded new ordinations by 100." What are we to make of "the large number of applicants"? Let us read on.

"A gentleman said to me the other day: My son is going into the Church; he does not care a rap about spiritual things; he thinks he will have an easy time in a country parish." This young rip was clearly not selected to join the "well-educated, deeply spiritual, good all-round gentlemen" sustained by this fund; but there is no doubt that some other religious training institution welcomed him with open arms. Then again, "a Bishop said: The candidates who are coming forward to-day are mostly weaklings; many of them are not the sort I would like to employ in my garden." One can sympathize with the Bishop in his dislike of "weeds" in his garden, but we are not surprised that his methods of cultivation should cause them to proliferate. And again, "many of the candidates are Council School boys . . . coming into the ministry partly to improve their position."

Thus we get a true picture of the stuff whereof our State parsons are made. For with naïve candour our author says: "I reject a great number of men as unsuitable and almost all of them manage to obtain grants from other societies, and finally get ordained." Almost all, mark you; and the total number of ordinands only 600! Both in regard to numbers and quality what a revelation! Yet we get people like Sir George Arthur, M.V.O., writing as follows in the *Evening News* for May 6: "If only the good people who shake their heads sadly over the 'spread of irreligion' would shove their hands into their pockets and feed the funds devoted to providing ordinands, they might find that 'spread' very severely checked. Young men in their hundreds are known to be eager candidates for the ministry, only there is quite insufficient cash available for their training and equipment." No, Sir George, I am afraid that your statement of the case does not agree with the facts. As for "checking the spread of irreligion," the only cure would be to put the Time Machine into reverse gear.

Now for some further figures to rejoice the hearts of heretics. "Last year there were 34,000 less communicants on Easter Sunday; there were 22,000 less Sunday school teachers; 16,000 less baptisms; 6,000 less confirmation candidates in the Church of England." And this in spite of an increasing population. There's hope for the Old Country yet! Then our presumably by way of caustic comment author quaintly adds: "In 1913 there were 500 divorces, and in 1930 there were 5,000." Well, at any rate there were 4,500 more couples who had the sense to realize that it is no longer compulsory to live



in marital misery just because a parson has babbled some nonsense over them in church. Five thousand couples were enabled to make a fresh start, which the Church would deny them if it could.

Notwithstanding the obvious decrease in religious enthusiasm, the monies contributed to this fund continue to mount up steadily. £4,200 was received in 1930, as compared with £3,400 in 1929; and the secretary ends the year without a penny to his credit, and hopes to collect £5,500 during 1931. And this in spite of his contradictory statement that "this year is proving to be a very difficult year for getting money." As professional beggars it must be granted that the clergy stand unrivalled! But how can we account for the increase and the optimism?

The community as a whole has not become richer, so that must be ruled out as a possible factor. Some new subscribers were netted by the expedient of sending out something like 5,000 more begging letters. But the response was proportionally smaller, there being 95 per cent of failures as against 93½ per cent the previous year. An indication, let us hope, of the public's greater perspicacity. The poorer contributors did not increase either in numbers or donations; but the average contribution of the remainder rose from over £5 to over £6 10s. There is only one explanation which seems to account for this phenomenon. The regular contributors are clearly rich or well-to-do, and it is well known that in this class personal wealth increases, as a rule, with age.

But a time will come, and the indications are that it is not so very distant, when the regular contributors will go the way of all flesh, and when an unlimited broadcasting of begging letters will fail to elicit any material response. Last year I suggested that 1974 would be a famous one for the then Secretary of this fund, for the last of the Evangelicals would be entering on his training with £30,000 to see him through. This year I am less optimistic—from the Fund's point of view. For I do not believe it will survive the year 1955. No doubt there will still be plenty of lazy half-wits willing to apply for soft jobs as teachers of childish superstitions. And the standard of intelligence and education expected of ordinands will, naturally, get lower and lower. But the number of rich mutts willing to pay for the training of poor mugs will be negligible—or, if not negligible, let us at any rate hope, reduced to an insignificant minimum.

C. S. FRASER.

### Omen.

Just a few leaves  
Upon the poplar trees  
Sway idly in the autumn breeze.

It won't be long  
Before the frost will come  
And end their melancholy song.

Or else the rain,  
Returning yet again,  
Will finish once for all their pain.

But the tall trees,  
Denuded of their leaves,  
Will live, no matter how it freeze.

What though it rain,  
Or snow cover the plain,  
These trees will greet the spring again.

So will our race,  
In which we have no place,  
Survive, and finally reach grace.

BAYARD SIMMONS.

## A Woman's Point of View.

(A Paper read at the Annual Conference of the N.S.S.)

A CHARACTERISTIC of all classes of English society is the desire to be considered respectable. All that is gorgeous and showy in military displays, in religious ceremonies, in monarchical processions, and in general flaunting of wealth, receives overflowing measure of admiration. To the unthinking majority, whatever is well-established must be right, opinions powerfully supported must be true, the orthodox view is necessarily respectable. Conversely, what is strange is under suspicion, causes struggling in poverty are contemptible, and pioneers of new ideas are social outcasts.

Life presents well-defined, well-protected roads crowded with the commonplace. He who would tread untried and difficult paths must pass in lonely grandeur.

The Christian religion bears the accepted hall-mark of respectability. It is old, deeply-rooted in the lives of the people, extremely rich and pompous. In its Holy Book, all types of men and women find justification for their beliefs, be they rich or poor, war-like or peaceful, teetotal or hard-drinking, imperialistic or communistic. Over woman it exercises a peculiar fascination, for does it not claim that her elevation has kept pace with the advancement of Christianity? For centuries it has taught woman her mission in life. She was created after the man, derived from the man, and made for the man. She has no alternative but to consider him as the immediate object of her existence. Her position by birth is one of humility, secondary and dependent. Her relation to her husband is that of a subordinate yielding loving subjection. If her Christian training has been perfectly successful, she comes to the altar entirely ignorant of the sex relationship involved in marriage. She has been taught to avoid the subject as indecent and altogether too shameful for parents to discuss with their children. She now learns with a shock what is expected of her as a wifely duty which she may by no means neglect. This state of ignorance, complete or partial, is much more common than is generally supposed.

The wife is enjoined to bear as many children as possible. Her mission is now about to be fulfilled in the care and nurture of children and in trying to influence her husband while submitting unconditionally to his will. However unhappy or degrading that marriage may prove to be, she has no alternative but to submit slavishly, hoping for her reward in Heaven. Her life is to be spent in the home and her interests enclosed by its walls.

The suggestion that women should be educated, trained to enter professions, or take part in public duties, gave a tremendous shock to Christian opinion. Woman was threatened with the loss of her womanhood, that is the ideal of womanhood as laid down by the clergy. Unmarried women, having missed their vocation in life, were offered the consolation of performing charitable works for the Lord.

At the risk of losing the approval of the highly respectable, Freethinking men and women boldly attacked these hoary traditions. One by one their power has been undermined. Girls, as well as boys, are now being developed both physically and mentally. Frank comradeship is taking the place of chivalry with its half-veiled contempt. Civil marriage ensures a contract in which the two persons concerned may become husband and wife by clasping hands as equals and making a mutual promise. Unlike the Church marriage ceremony it preserves the dignity of both. The knowledge of Birth Control has been so



helpful and has become so popular that even the Bishops dare not ban it, but have to give it a shame-faced support. For those unhappily married, divorce is becoming easier. On all that concerns the relation of the sexes, Freethought has brought to bear the strong light of common sense.

The only happy relationship in marriage is that of mutual respect and affection with, in the words of George Meredith, "a frank interchange of the best that is in both."

Far from Christianity having elevated woman, it has restricted her liberty and degraded her status. It is the glory of Freethought that it is weeding out superstitious and ignoble traditions to allow of the full development of a freer and happier humanity. It has not always the public recognition of the services it has rendered, for, as soon as a reform is well-established, Christianity claims the credit of having fathered it. Yet Freethinkers have their reward, for joy is in the striving not in the goal achieved, and in the relay race of life each runner as he tires finds willing and eager hands stretched out for the torch of progress.

HYPATIA ROSETTI.

### The Book Shop.

Messrs. Faber & Faber, Ltd., have published Berkeley's Commonplace Book, price 7s. 6d. net. It is the notebook of a philosopher, much in little, and although Berkeley's idealism has suffered from assaults by later discoveries, there are many admirable aphorisms in this collection. Berkeley, in my opinion, was in the same category of liberal-minded men as Jeremy Taylor, William Law, and Richard Hooker. One has only to read their works (and it is a Freethinker's duty to know the other side) to realize that, together with being sincere, their positions were held with dignity, and their views were presented in a manner that no modern divines can ever hope to imitate. Berkeley wrestled with the problem of perception, and if his conclusions were questioned by later philosophers, he displays in these notes that calm and enviable spirit of gentle disputation which is a mark of real civilization. In one note, 362, he says, "Let my adversaries answer any one of mine, I'll yield. If I don't answer every one of theirs, I'll yield." An excellent record, worthy of the best in thought is note 764—evidently the writer's resolution: "To be eternally banishing Metaphysics, etc., and recalling men to Common Sense." The capitals in the last two words are Berkeley's; they deserve them, for in much that passes as philosophy common sense is a foreign language. The kernel of this splendid little book appears to be that no object has an existence apart from the mind; this was a half-truth, the light from which glimmered round the complete world of extension and thought. Berkeley gave the ball of philosophy a kick during his generation; his views were naturally flavoured by his position as a Bishop, but there are flashes in this desirable book that could be used to prove that he sought truth regardless of consequences. His dissertation on note 7, "Why time in pain is longer than time in pleasure" if it is available, would make interesting reading, for a speck of flint on the eyeball is an eternity in comparison with the sublimities of ten minutes of Clapham and Dwyer.

THE *Passing Show*, a humorous weekly, is well worth the twopence; it has wit in its gaiety, and reason is nearly always next door to both. Under the heading "The Showman Replies," the compiler of the feature deals with the tall talk of the week. A Mr. S. R. C. Bosanquet had indulged in the luxury of the following gem: "The dole takes away the incentive to work." The *Showman* replies: "Also the incentive to steal or starve, when there's no work to be had." It is such well-aimed blows as these that keep a bearing rein on the lack of horse-sense from those who have little or no acquaintance with the life of the common man. It was the press, capable even of kicking a man when he was down, that

christened the Unemployed Insurance the "Dole." That the common man supports the cheap press when he need not, is one of those extraordinary facts of paying to be insulted and maligned. The pip-squeaking journalists—God help them!—it costs nothing to say so—are now to be seen and heard bellowing loudly about the opening of Cinemas on Sunday, and the contributions of these places to hospitals. They are now against the severe Sabbatarians, but the issue to the journalists is about as clear as a November fog. If the workman has twopence to squander, let him invest it in the *Passing Show*; it will make him laugh, and it will be like wine to a heavy heart. We do not believe that any ordinary man likes five murders for a penny or any other batch of sensationalism when the journalist is seen painting a miniature with a white-wash brush.

In connexion with the above paragraph, the industrious reader who delights in hearing as many voices as possible through the printed word will find in the *Monthly Review*, a publication issued by the Midland Bank, a curious refutation of St. Paul. In the Second Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Thessalonians, chap. 3, verse 10, we find, "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat." In the *Review* mentioned above, the iron facts of existence press out of the bloodless veins of the banker the following: "The social arguments in favour of some form of unemployment insurance, and even relief, are by now almost unanimously accepted in this country." With automatic machines to make automatic machines, and in the near future no doubt one man working all the coal mines in England by simply pressing a button with his big toe, this piece of direct opposition to the Pauline doctrine of work is a criticism of the rigid conception of life with its biblical standard.

The *Countryman* is a quarterly, and the issue, April-May-June, makes the pleasant kind of reading associated with reality, that, for this feature alone, raises expectancy in the mind of the reader. I am sorry to say that the high hopes with which one approaches the journal are not altogether realized. The Editor is doing his best, but the disgraceful state of agriculture is accentuated and underlined by the admission that only through advertisements is the paper able to carry on. Was it quite worth the space to record the transport of a Smithy to America? The Smithy was brought by Mr. Henry Ford; we hope his next purchase will be the three huge and ugly buildings over-shadowing the House of Lords and the Tate Gallery on the banks of the Thames—he could also include the architect with the deal. A very good sketch is to be found on page 44; two men are looking on a view underneath: Road Official to Local Surveyor: "We don't know just where the road is going, but you may as well start cutting down some trees." A word of praise is given to the work of Mr. Edmund Blunden, who can touch the strings of country music in verse that is never mawkish or insincere. A Scottish farmer, Captain A. R. McDougal, in the year 1931, defends Tithes on very unstable grounds, and the flavour and the fact that the common man is scarcely mentioned in the pages of this quarterly, together with the price, rather makes one think that Goldsmith, although dead for a century and a half, is a nearer approximation to the real truth about the country. Agriculture will die with the human race and not before, and any journal that ignores the spudding of thistles at ninepence a day deserves to jig about with advertisements for its existence. That piece of bunk and superstition the "Gold Standard" is gently prodded and left alone. The *Countryman* is good value for anyone who is oblivious that its price is one quarter of the rent of a labourer's cottage, and one twelfth of the labourer's wages.

There is a period in the life of land when it lies fallow. There is also a time when the book-lover and book-reader takes a holiday, and the most provoking inducement to do this is good weather and a little leisure. The mounting of the sun into Aries caused Chaucer to fling away his books, but, in his *Parlement of Fools* he shows that he has recorded his out of door impressions:—



"Now welcom, somer, with thy soune softe,  
That hast this wintres weders overshake  
And driven away longe nyglites blake," . . .

I have not seriously attacked *The Man of Genius*, by Lombroso, but a few words with a friend set me thinking that it would be good fun to make a search among illustrious names for healthy men. Chaucer is too far away to come within the purview of Lombroso, but I cannot find the names of Borrow, Morris, or Browning in his index. Genius, the pearl in the oyster, is a problem and a fact; it does not matter much if we cannot fully understand it; we can take advantage of its harvest. For want of a better description I should call the above four "out-of-door" men. "Many a good thought is to be had by walking," writes Nietzsche, but I cannot include him with the four. Hazlitt swilled strong tea, and his name also does not appear in the index. Cobbett hated tea, and I find that I can add his name to my collection.

C-DE-B.

### The Papal Broadcast.

Thy Word, grows old: O God on High,  
Send some new message from the sky,  
The Tower of Babel downward cast  
We moderns substitute the Mast.  
Though Satan cause eternal din,  
Yet may Thy Angels listen in!

God's in His heaven  
We can but try,  
In spite of Atheist's derision  
To get a sensible reply.

In regal state from palace residence,  
A Prince of pompous title, "Excellence";  
In golden necklet and silken robes,  
Descends the gold and emerald throne;  
Laying aside his jewelled cross,  
The silver microphone to drone.  
The Rubied Cardinals crowd around  
Resplendent officials cumber the ground,  
The Listening World awaits the call  
When silver trumpets summon all;  
Neglecting mass, and prayers, and fast,  
While a dead language is broadcast;  
The jewel-bespattered Book's no use,  
Marconi must switch on the juice!

The Reverend Father, according to plan,  
With pious looks much like a charlatan;  
For the benefit of assembled nations,  
Ladles out these simple potions;  
"Ye wallowing rich, your treasures stored,  
Remember the poor when you are bored;  
Stewards all, your charity dispense,  
Neglecting not poor Peter's pence.  
Ye wretched poor, humbly remember too,  
That Jesus Christ was just like you;  
Content to suffer grief and pain,  
Well satisfied with heavenly gain."

Gods cannot laugh, they say,  
We hope they're not on earth,  
Such strange illusions might  
Cause catastrophic mirth!

MAX COOGLIGH.

### Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SUNDAY AND THE B.B.C.

SIR.—The increasing bigotry of the B.B.C. in regard to the worsening of the Sunday programmes compels me to write to ask when the *Freethinker* will arrive with a thin post-card, ready to be signed and posted off to Savoy Hill to show the B.B.C. that at least one section of the community intends to fight for its own rights. Not everyone can indite a good letter, and I suggest

that the Secular Society express itself officially, and the *Freethinker* also, and that the essence of these articles be printed on a thin post-card and enclosed in each copy of the *Freethinker* for distribution. Or at least some other form of distribution be made.

A study of the arrogance and worst forms of religious intolerance can be found in the Sunday programmes for the last few weeks. With the coming of the slack summer days, it appears that the B.B.C. is endeavouring to entrench its Sunday policy still further while the opposition is apparently sleeping. I suggest this matter be the first object of attack by the Secular Society and the *Freethinker* during the immediate future.

I need not recapitulate the sins and omissions of the B.B.C. (whose initials have given a friend of mine an alternative, resentment-outlet name) but it is now time to inform the Headquarters direct. Many of the local newspapers and national organs are closed to criticism through their columns, and where not, that method is not so effective as filling the postbag of the B.B.C.

Even the children are now subject to a Sunday "talk" on the Bible, which is worthy of cheap amateur theatre, no, worse. Fortunately, most children are too healthy in mind to wish to listen to such stuff.

On with (our) show!

L. CORINNA.

### SINCERITY IN EXCHANGE FOR £ S. D.

SIR,—The very interesting letter of D.P.S., in your issue of March 8, last, was, to me, "good meat." More of this sort are wanting. Only by hearing the truth will people become convinced. Quite recently the gemeente (congregation) of the Dutch Reformed Church at Wepeener, Orange Free State, required a predikant (parson). Owing to the general depression they decided to lower the yearly stipend by £100. "Calls" were sent to seven predikanten in succession. Not one of them considered the bait sufficiently alluring. The "swart span" (elders and deacons) thereupon decided to "call" again, this time adding the £100 to the stipend. The bait was taken at once, and a predikant was obtained. From this it is quite clear that these gentry will not provide their dupes with what pleases them—the dupes—except under a certain fixed price. It must be understood that the relationship between the average member of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa and the predikant, is the same as is known to exist between Roman Catholics and their priests. In a word, they are priest-ridden. One is left wondering what kind of sincerity is given under the circumstances quoted above. The sum of £100 is known to all of us to be a respectable amount of money, and it may be thought that an undue cut had been made. It must be understood, however, that the yearly stipend attached to the above situation is £800, together with a free house and grounds and conveniences, including electric light. A motor-car is also included among the conveniences. This, of course, cannot be run without petrol, which, at present, costs 2s. 9d. per gallon. One can at least remark that the sincerity is dearly bought.

D. E. MILLICAMP,

Mafeteng, Basutoland, South Africa.

### GOD AND THE UNIVERSE.

SIR,—There is one point, apparently at first sight of no great importance, which has tormented me like an intellectual toothache, till it must come out.

Sir James Jeans speaks of time running backward, and thereupon he draws a vivid picture of the Universe reversing. Dean Inge, as President of the Aristotelian Society, brought out the same notion, and as on both occasions it was insisted upon as something impressive and paradoxical, I take it that they both got it near the high water mark of the Thought in Academic circles.

Yet a page boy who counts his buttons first from his chin to his abdomen; and then backwards has, in his naive way, no sense of profundity. Perhaps he knows what Messrs. Inge, Jeans, Einstein ignore, that Time never regresses; even when the phenomena are met with in reverse order, the succession of the conscious states involved in observing so much is always forward.



Not one of these gentlemen has read *Principles of Psychology*, or learnt anything of the Fundamental Processes of the Mind, or he would know that playing Tricks with Time, such as that mentioned, or confounding it with Space, is not the mark of deep thinking, but rather the sign of an intellect waterlogged by the wretched stuff still taught at the Universities, in the guise of philosophy. I hope to return to this again, for I have touched on a symptom of a deep-seated malady.

ARTHUR LYNCH.

### Obituary.

MR. ALBERT HEATH.

WITH extreme regret we have to announce the death of Albert Heath. For over five years he was the enthusiastic and energetic Secretary of the South London Branch. His services always receiving the heartiest approval of all who were aware of them. The Branch took pride in his diligence and reliability, and anticipated from him many more years of usefulness to the Freethought cause. We calculated, but little realized that our hopes were to be shattered by his death from cancer at the age of thirty-seven.

To Mrs. Heath we tender our sincere sympathy, and assure her that we share in the loss of one for whom we also had the greatest affection. Mr. A. D. McLaren read the Secular Burial Service.—F.P.C.

DR. JOSEPH LEWIS, M.A., D.S.C.

WE regret to record the passing, at the comparatively early age of fifty-seven, of Dr. Joseph Lewis, late Director of the Government Chemical Laboratory in Johannesburg, South Africa. Ample justice has been rendered to the activities of the deceased in chemistry and research by the daily press, but little or no reference was made to his staunch adherence to the principles of Freethought throughout his career. Although he was never a member of any heretical body, no more welcome fare could be offered him than the works of those eminent in the "best of cause."

During the final stages of his painful illness his chief interest was in the progress of the fight against ignorance and superstition. The writer read an address before a large company at the interment of his ashes in Pretoria Cemetery on May 7. This address was followed by another delivered by a friendly cleric, who unfortunately could not resist the temptation of bringing a certain degree of religiosity into a generous tribute to the character of our late friend. Dr. Lewis was the husband of Mrs. Ethelreda Lewis, well known to readers the world over as editor of the adventures of *Trader Horn*.—E.M.

A PART-TIME Clerical Post in Bournemouth is offered to a good writer, who can use discretion in dealing with the public in a semi-government office. Preference will be given to an unmarried mother. Commencing end of June.—Apply Box 156 FREETHINKER, 61 Farringdon Street, E.C.4.

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## SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

LONDON.

OUTDOOR.

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

FINSBURY PARK N.S.S.—11.15, Mr. H. S. Wishart—"Jesus Christ—a Fraud, Phantasy and Failure."

FULHAM AND CHELSEA BRANCH N.S.S. (corner of Shorlands Road, North End Road, Walham Green): Wednesday, at 7.30, Mr. Franks and Mr. F. Day. Saturday, at 7.30, Mr. F. Haskell and Mr. E. Bryant.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S.—Every Tuesday evening at 8.0, Mr. L. Ebury will lecture outside Hampstead Heath Station, I.M.S., South End Road. Every Thursday evening at 8.0, Mr. L. Ebury will lecture at Arlington Road.

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

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. Stonhouse Street, Clapham Road, 7.30, Mrs. E. Grout—"Christian Ethics." Wednesday, Station Road (near Brixton Station), 8.0, Mr. L. Ebury. Friday, Liverpool Street, Camberwell Gate, 8.0, a Lecture.

WEST HAM BRANCH N.S.S. (outside Technical College, Romford Road, Stratford, E.): 7.0, Mr. E. C. Saphin—A Lecture.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 12.0, Mr. B. A. Le Maine; 3.30, Messrs. C. E. Wood and C. Tuson; 6.30, Messrs. A. H. Hyatt, A. D. McLaren and B. A. Le Maine. Every Wednesday, at 7.30, Messrs. C. E. Wood and C. Tuson; every Thursday, at 7.0, Messrs. E. C. Saphin and J. Darby; 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.

INDOOR.

HIGHGATE DEBATING SOCIETY (Winchester Hotel, Archway Road, Highgate, N.): Wednesday, June 17, at 7.45, Mr. J. Newton—"Some Implications of Determinism."

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1): 11.0, C. Delisle Burns, M.A., D.Lit.—"The Standard of Living."

COUNTRY.

OUTDOOR.

BRADFORD BRANCH N.S.S.—Ramble to Denholme, Sunday, June 14, meet Thornton Tram Terminus, Bradford, at 8.30 prompt.

BRIGHTON BRANCH N.S.S. (The Level): 3.30, A Lecture.

BOLTON BRANCH N.S.S.—Mr. G. Whitehead will lecture in Town Hall steps, Bolton, at 7.30, Saturday, June 13, and all the following week, at 7.30. On Sunday, June 14, at 3.0 and 7.0, in Blackburn Market.

COLNE (Bottom of Spring Lane)—Monday, 15, at 7.30, Mr. J. Clayton.

CRAWSHAWBOOTH. Tuesday, 16, at 7.30, Mr. J. Clayton.

ENFIELD (Barnes Square)—Friday, 12, at 8.0, Mr. J. Clayton.

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY.—Ramble to Meikle Bin, meet corner of Dundas Street and Cathedral Street at 11.0. Members and friends invited.

LIVERPOOL (Merseyside) BRANCH N.S.S.—Sunday, at Queen's Drive (opposite Baths), Messrs. Jackson and Tisco; Monday, at Beaumont Street, Messrs. Jackson and Wollen; Tuesday, at Edge Hill Lamp, Messrs. Little and Sherwin; Wednesday, at Waste Ground adjoining Old Swan Library, Messrs. Little and Shortt; Thursday, at Corner of High Park Street and Park Road, Messrs. Jackson and Tisco. All at 7.30. Current *Freethinkers* on sale at all meetings.

NELSON (Carr Road)—Sunday, 14, at 7.30, Mr. J. Clayton.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.—Wednesday, June 17, at 8.0, Bigg Market—A Lecture.

SUNDERLAND.—Sunday, June 14, at 7.0, near Boilermakers Hall, Lecture on "Christianity and Socialism."

WINGATE.—Saturday, June 13, at 7.15, a Debate—"Has Humanity Benefitted, or will it Benefit from Christianity?" Affir.: Rev. D. Dixon, Wesleyan Church; Neg.: J. J. Brighton, N.S.S.

INDOOR.

EAST LANCASHIRE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION (58 Bridge Street, Burnley): The Manchester Branch of the N.S.S. intend to visit Townley Hall, Burnley on Sunday, June 14. Will friends please meet outside the Hall at 3.0 (restaurant in the grounds).

NEWCASTLE BRANCH N.S.S. (Arcade, Pilgrim Street): 11.0 Members Meeting. At 7.30 a lecture will be given in Bigg Market by Mr. Keast.



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