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PRINCIPAL CONTENTS.

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Views and Opinions.

Religion and The State.

In one form or another the question of the relations between Religion and the State is always with us. Inevitably so. So long as some people sincerely believe in religion, or so long as others find it convenient to encourage a belief in it, religion must colour, and sometimes determine the line of social development.

The events of the past week have furnished two illustrations of what has been said, and although they both deal directly with the Roman Catholic Church they have very much wider implications. And in so many other directions Roman Catholicism serves as an exaggerated form of a prevalent social disease.

A Damning Indictment.

The two events to which I have referred are the speech of Cardinal Bourne, on the proper relations of Roman Catholics to political parties, and the recent message sent from Rome to the Spanish Government setting forth certain claims of the Church. It will be

recalled that following his attempts to stir up ill-feeling against the Republican Government, the Archbishop of Spain left the country. Later he returned, quietly and without notice, and was actually in the country for some days before the Government was aware of his presence. Then he was arrested, conveyed under guard to the frontier and turned out. It will be remembered that when Ferrer returned to Spain he was seized, and by the activities of the Church and Crown faced with trumped-up charges and shot. The Republican Government behaved in a more chivalrous, but less Christian manner.

But on June 3 the Archbishop sent from Rome a statement written (published in the Times for June 18) complaining of the action of the Government for having violated those "sacred rights enjoyed from time immemorial by the Church in Spain." When we remember that this statement was written from Rome, we may take it that it was written with the full sanction of the Vatican, and that it, therefore, represents the latest expression of opinion as to the place which the Papacy claims for the Roman Church in the modern State.

* * *

An Insolent Demand.

The "wrongs" under which the Church in Spain is suffering, is set forth in the following twelve clauses:—

- (1) Official announcement of a separation of Church and State, and the Secularization of cemeteries in the near future.
(2) Prohibition of Governors of Provinces to appear officially in any religious act.
(3) Prohibition to the Army to be represented as was customary at religious acts.
(4) Suppression of the four military orders of Santiago, Calatrava, Montessa, and Alcantra.
(5) Denial of Civil rights to the National Catholic Agrarian Federation.
(6) Deprivation of the right of the Church to be represented on the Council of public instruction.
(7) Suppression of the military escort of honour during street processions of the Blessed Sacrament, traditional in Spain.
(8) Suppression of obligatory religious teaching in primary and other schools.
(9) Prohibition of crucifixes and religious emblems

in schools where any one pupil refuses religious instruction.

(10) Liberty of cults which infringes fundamental laws under the Concordat.

(11) The regulations concerning artistic treasures which infringe the rights of the Church over its own property.

(12) Violation of the personal immunity of ecclesiastics as expressly recognized in existing laws.

* * *

The Church Unmasked.

It must be admitted that the Spanish Revolution has placed the Church in an awkward position. To have acquiesced in the complete secularization of the State would have been to forego the historic Roman Catholic claim to dominate the secular powers. On the other hand the document, in view of the state of religious thought throughout the civilized world, might have been more craftily drawn. Doubtless the fact of Spain, the most illiterate, and therefore the most Christian of European countries, turning out such a "faithful son of the Church" as Alfonso, and treating religious beliefs as practically outside the purview of the State, has disturbed the Papacy more than it cares to admit. With all the larger States in Europe showing a tendency to put the Church in its place, and with Mussolini announcing that he will permit no one to interfere with the State, and refusing the Church the right to dominate the schools, the Church might have well looked to Spain as the one bright spot in a religiously depressing world. Hence one of the most impertinent, one of the most monstrous documents that the world has seen for some time. No one could have drawn up a more damning indictment of the Roman Church than the Roman Church has drawn up for itself in its statement of "grievances."

I want to emphasize the word "grievances," because the grievances are all claims. Consider items 1, 2, 3 and 7. The Church is demanding that the Roman Church, not a Church, but the Roman Church is to be established by the State, and that the State shall be officially represented at its ecclesiastical functions. It demands that the State shall publicly proclaim to the people that it is subordinate to the Church, or at least identified with it. It is not asking that the Church shall receive protection during the performance of its ceremonies if such protection be required, but that the State shall take an official part in them. The new Government simply says that in future the State shall have nothing to do with religious ceremonies at all. That is a step in the right direction, and it is one that we hope our own Government will one day also take. It is ridiculous that at this time of day civilized Governments should be taking an official part in a series of ceremonies that, however disguised, are morally and mentally no better than the ceremonial dances and incantations of a body of African Medicine-men.

* * *

Secularizing the State.

Item No. 4 has been forced on the Government by the activities of these "military orders." No. 11 is no more than an assertion of the right to have a voice in the final management or disposition of the possessions held by the Church, but which are in fact mainly State property. When we are sufficiently civilized to disestablish—really disestablish—the Churches in this country, the State will properly demand a right to say something as to the destination and use of the wealth and possessions of the Established Church here. Numbers 5 and 6 is a claim that no State with genuine religious equality could entertain for a moment. It is

true that the same kind of claim is made in this country and granted in an oblique manner. But no religious body in a State, where all citizens are held to be equal before the law, are entitled to ask that they shall be represented as religious organizations on any public body whatsoever. They should have all the rights and privileges that any other organization has—just that and no more. We have submitted in this country to the obstruction of educational progress just because we have followed the policy of asking what the Churches and Chapels desired, or what would satisfy them. But in England we naturally cling to that sort of thing after the mass of educated people have outgrown them. In times to come England will probably be known as a land rich in these primitive survivals, just as Australia is rich in primitive fauna and flora that have died out elsewhere. But that should not hinder some of us appreciating the better plan followed elsewhere.

Numbers 8, 10 and 12 are fine illustrations of the difficulty of even tolerating the Roman Church in a modern civilized State. It demands that no matter what people want, children shall be taught the Roman Catholic religion in the schools. It denies also that there shall be complete liberty for sects other than the Roman Catholic one to live or to teach in the State. More, and worse, it demands that ecclesiastics shall be above the law. This is, of course, one of the medieval rights of the Church, when the church stood above and outside the laws, and its property was free from taxation. But it will come as a surprise to many to learn that this kind of thing existed in Spain, and that the Roman Church has the consummate impudence to claim that it shall continue to exist.

* * *

A Document to Remember.

I repeat I do not know a more damning indictment of the Church in recent years than this document. It is the last word in religious insolence. It is worthy of, at latest, the sixteenth century and would not have disgraced the tenth. It shows that the Roman Church does not abate a jot of its claims, and that it threatens social liberty wherever it is permitted to exist. It claims not merely the right to exist, but to prevent others, with whom it does not agree, existing. It asserts its right to be above all law which contradicts its own decrees or threatens its interests, and in the speech of Cardinal Bourne there is laid down the plain principle that in all cases men and women must put the interests and teachings of the Roman Church before every other claim. In England it talks of the rights of the parents in the schools. In Spain it demands that the teaching of religion, and by that it means its religion, shall be compulsory in the schools. And as the Church claims to be above the State, so it demands that its priests shall be immune to the ordinary law.

Spanish reformers should welcome this document. It will help the people to realize what they are threatened with and what they escaped from. It will help to make the issue at the elections clear. I am writing this just before the elections take place, but if the Spanish people recall the King—who was disgraced by the Archbishop as a "faithful son of the Church," and re-establishes the Church in Spain, a Church that has—even for the Christian Church—a black record of crime and cruelty—it will have shown the world that it is not yet fit for freedom.

I will deal with Cardinal Bourne next week.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

Though we travel the world over to find the beautiful we must carry it with us, or we find it not.—Emerson.

The Humanism of Hardy.

"The secret of life is courage."—C. R. W. Nevins.

"But thought and faith are mightier things than time
Can wrong,
Made splendid once with speech, or made sublime
With song."—Swinburne.

"I love life which is earthly, life as it is."

Anatole France.

A MEMORIAL to Thomas Hardy, erected near the thatched cottage at Higher Bockhampton, Dorchester, where the famous novelist was born, was unveiled recently by Prof. Lowes, of Harvard University, U.S.A. The memorial which took the form of a granite column, was the gift of some American admirers. It was fitting that the memorial should have its base in the soil of Egdon Heath, for here was, in a sense, the centre of Hardy's work. Few other novelists have been so profoundly conscious of the roots of old England, deep in its prehistoric, Roman and Saxon past.

The precise place Hardy will ultimately occupy among the Olympians we cannot venture to anticipate the judgment of time by deciding, but that he has gained a lasting success, the magnificent works he has given us bear very sufficient testimony. From *Far from the Madding Crowd* to *Jude the Obscure*—what a splendid range of novels. The characters, too, from Bathsheba to Sue Bridehead seem taken from real life. The heroine of *Two on a Tower*, who woos a lover younger than herself, is frequent in these novels as in real experience. She is almost ignored by the circulating-library writers, whose many books proclaim their industry rather than their ability. The women in Hardy's pages are not invariably charming, but they are feminine, and their moods and whims are depicted by a master-hand. In his knowledge of "the concrete Unknowable," he was as wide as Shakespeare; as modern as Meredith. Hardy was no less successful with his male characters; witness Gabriel Oak in *Far from the Madding Crowd*, Dr. Titmiers in *The Woodlanders*; Michael Henchard in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, Angel Clare in *Tess*, or the unfortunate hero in *Jude the Obscure*.

When we knew Hardy's novels without knowing the Wessex peasantry the type seemed exaggerated, but a sojourn in the West Country redeems them from caricature. For Hardy wrote of these sons and daughters of the soil without sentiment and without patronage. More than that, Hardy sowed broadcast over his work the most delightful, ironic humour. Not one of his working-class folk but has a native pleasantry, jovial or sly.

Although Hardy has been dubbed pessimist, there is no lack of comedy in his works. *The Hand of Ethelberta* is as full of comedy as an egg is full of meat. *The Laodicean* contains a far-fetched idea worked out with earnestness, and in the true spirit of comedy. *Far from the Madding Crowd* is Hardy in his sunniest mood. From the opening description of Gabriel Oak's smile to the ringing down of the curtain it is a joy to all who possess taste enough to discriminate between a Molieresque humour and a Charlie Chaplin slapstick farce.

No modern writer cared less for melodramatic justice and the happy ending. Nemesis, indeed, dogs the guilty in his novels, as in the immortal Greek tragedies. As these characters fulfil their doom, they drag the innocent to misery with them, as actual people in real life. In *The Woodlanders*, *Tess*, and *Jude the Obscure*, tragedies "too deep for tears" grow out of apparently, trivial causes, true to the course of mundane things. *Life's Little Ironies*, a volume of short stories, more perfect than anything

by the Russian writers, is full of the same acute observation of humanity.

Ordinary life attracted Hardy. His favourite heroes were farmers, artisans, labourers, and middle-class characters. From these externally prosaic existences, Hardy shows us the eternal comedy and tragedy of life. There is the failure of will, the calculations of egoism, pride, coquetry, passion, hatred, love, our own foibles, our own littleness, and our own errors.

Where in all contemporary literature is there nobler work than the poignant scenes in *Tess*, or that other showing the dying Jude and the choristers; or, yet again, the quiet figure of the bereaved girl in the closing scene of *The Woodlanders*, as wonderful, in its way, as Millet's picture of "The Angelus." In these is struck the consummate tragic note as in the pages of Aeschylus and our own Shakespeare. They wring the heart as keenly as actual, individual experience. For they are life sublimed by passing through a powerful imagination and a forceful personality.

The attentive reader cannot fail to notice the essential Secularism embedded in these admirable novels and stories. Even in the earlier books, amid their picturesque colour, their delightful atmosphere, their delicious pastoral scents and sounds, we find a frank Paganism. As the author advanced in reputation and grew in intellectual power, the note deepens, until in *Tess*, it merges into a cry of defiance, and, finally in *Jude the Obscure*, a great sob of pain. *Tess* is a masterpiece among masterpieces. It is a noble and significant work, worthy of a great English novelist. It is an arraignment of "Providence," and as we read, we recall the scathing words of the blinded Gloucester in the greatest of all tragedies:—

"As flies to wanton boys are we to the gods,
They kill us for their sport."

Hardy's rare genius was expressed in verse as well as prose. To open *The Dynasts* is to be confronted with a book of great dramatic power, and full of the pure stuff of poetry. Another volume of verse *Satires of Circumstance*, shows this great artist's keen vision and understanding. Take, for example, that fine imaginative poem, *God's Funeral*. The author pictures a slow procession moving across a plain at twilight, and bearing a strange form. He listens to the lament of the mourners for the being they have themselves created, and whom they cannot any longer keep alive. It is a daring piece of work, comparable to Heine's vision of a dying deity having the last sacraments administered to him, albeit there is none of the irony of the Voltaire of Germany.

Contemporary literature is so sugary, so romantic, that to refer to the virile writings of a master-craftsman brings a sense of largeness. It is like emerging from a crowded stuffy room to view the wide horizons of the West Country, where men and women know little of night-clubs, but know how to live and die with dignity. Not to know and to exult in Hardy's finest work is to be dead to the highest in literature, and ignorant of the great effects of English speech. Thomas Hardy enlarged our ideas of life and the world, and, by so doing, added a wondrous chamber to the house beautiful of art.

MIMNERMUS.

What is Love? 'tis not hereafter;
Present mirth hath present laughter;
What's to come is still unsure.—Shakespeare.

We are children of splendour and flame,
Of shuddering, also, and tears;
Magnificent out of the dust we came,
And abject from the spheres.

William Watson.

The Teleologic View of Existence

INASMUCH as the contention is that Materialism should interest itself in metaphysics primarily with a view to replacing anti-Materialistic theories, it behoves us to keep in mind what these theories are, and the way in which they treat the metaphysical problem. When we have visualized some of these false (unworkable) hypotheses, we shall better perceive how to oppose them with true ones.

To that end I have committed the unpardonable sin of chopping up contemporary philosophy into several definite compartments, and though there may be personal differences within them, they do not appear to warrant the introduction of another class. Their treatment will not pretend to be comprehensive; it is merely intended to sketch the respective attitudes towards the problem of the nature of existence, *i.e.*, the question of the number and quality of principles (substances; self-existents) at work, their attributes and the relations between them.

It is interesting to consider first the transcendental teleologic view because here we see that the acceptance of Determinism has not resulted in a Materialistic philosophy.

The leading idea is purpose by external decree. Determinism is endorsed, and then interpreted to run coeval with the purpose of an outside management. Final cause operates, and there is a "why" to everything. All that happens is in accordance with the intentions of some transcendental factor. The "pyramid" of sciences is accepted, but instead of being placed on its base is suspended from above. The "lower" is explained by the "higher," the simple by the complex. Evolution is the work of an Evolver.

The theory goes back to Aristotle ("all things move to their predestined end"), and was a leading feature of the philosophy of Lotze, who held that mechanism was true, yet required to be interpreted in terms of teleology; and of Ralph Cudworth (Hobbes' critic), who spoke of "plastic nature unconsciously evolving certain ends according to the Divine Will." Toland, about the same period, voiced a similar view. And Prof. Momerie, in his *Belief in God*, says purpose is as regular as law. Science, evolution, determinism, explain nothing. They are merely a summary of the facts to be explained. Science, we are told, is only a copy of an intellectual system that was in existence long before man.

To-day's representatives are Profs. Sorley, Seth, Pringle-Patterson, R. A. Millikan, J. Arthur Thomson, and Dean Inge. Science, says Thomson, only answers how? It cannot answer why? Needham's recent *The Sceptical Biologist* advocates the same view. As Sir O. Lodge says, "There is a far-off Divine Event to which all things are working." The latest is Millikan, who says God works according to law, and admits no caprice into his Determinism.

To sum up, according to the view of existence here under consideration *substance is intelligently controlled by an external Agent who works through law.*

The upshot is that Determinism apparently does not exhaust Materialism, one reason why I shall later contend that Materialism should not be restricted to Determinism.

* * *

There is no need to spend much time disposing of what is really only an elaboration of the argument from Design. We no longer think it marvellous that the Thames flows so conveniently near a large city, or like the curate, that we should thank God for send-

ing death at the end of life instead of in the middle, or that trees should grow with their roots in the ground and their branches in the air.

In the first place, what Bacon said of final causes is well known; like vestal virgins, they bear no fruit. The argument will always proceed from fitness to design, whatever the result. And to ascribe purpose to a process merely because it resembles a truly purposive process is surely unjustified and incapable of demonstration. How much more unjustified, then, is to ascribe design where the result does *not* resemble the intelligent fulfilment of an idea. The Teleologist, be it noticed, will always call it a Good Plan (relatively to man) and will hum and ha when confronted with the facts of Dysteleology (wasted germs, useless organs, disease, crime, etc.). He may tell you we must not judge God by human standards, and in that case his whole argument falls to the ground, for he is arguing from the very analogy of human ends. And again, there are no "ends" in nature; there are only results. In terms of the latest known type of existent, mind, history naturally appears as a general upward gradient. But recent history is only an infinitesimal part of existence, and there is dissolution as well as evolution. It happens to nations, species and individuals.

The central misconception appears to lie in a confusion over the word "law," the confusion being between "civil" and "natural" law. Briefly, the first is *prescriptive*, the second *descriptive*. Only the first implies a lawgiver.

From a more practical standpoint the theory of a transcendent purpose is quite unworkable. We are all made tools in the hand of God, liable to be thrust hither and thither regardless of our will. He is the Mighty Potter, we are mere clay. There is an end in view to which all things are tending. Some call it Teleology; some call it Fatalism. What difference to man is there between being blindly pushed on regardless of what he does, and being drawn as by a magnet to omnipotent ends likewise beyond his control?

Is nature, then, devoid of purpose? No; "purpose" is a term engaged to describe certain forms of behaviour involving prospective reference, and insofar as it exists in animated beings it exists in nature. It is a relative term, and to make it cover everything is to render it meaningless. Transcendent teleology knocks the word "purposeless" out of the dictionary just as Fatalism dispenses with "purpose." Final cause, or purpose, is a characteristic of say the behaviour known as writing a letter, but is quite inapplicable where the wind blows a stone from a cliff.

By far the more popular form of teleology is purpose by interference or inoculation, and it is the interventionist view with which it is hoped to deal later.

G. H. TAYLOR.

The first time I read an excellent book it is to me just as if I had gained a new friend; when I read over a book I have perused before, it resembles the meeting with an old one.—*Oliver Goldsmith.*

Books are not absolutely dead things, but . . . do preserve as in a vial the purest efficacy and extraction of that living intellect that bred them.—*Milton.*

The only thing of consequence is what we do: and for man, woman, or child, the first point of education is to make them do their best.—*Ruskin.*

If thou seest a man of understanding, get thee betimes unto him, and let thy foot wear the steps of his door. *Ecclesiasticus, vi. 36.*

A Deforming Anachronism.

THERE is no more glaring anomaly in the British constitution than the fact that we have Archbishops and Bishops of the Church of England as legislators. The dismissal of representatives of this particular Christian sect from Parliament is long overdue. It is amazing that a nation professedly democratic has permitted them to remain so long. In his recent denunciation of the House of Lords for mangling progressive measures the Prime Minister was certainly scathing, but he would have been well advised to emphasize as part of his indictment the anomaly of the clerics of one religious denomination out of many, having a share in making and shaping the nations laws. Past history shows that in the vast majority of instances the Bishops have been solid for reaction and retrogression; that they have opposed the extension of freedom and have thwarted the reasonable aspirations of reformers time and again.

About the beginning of the present century the malpractices and misdemeanours of the Lords were the subject of discussion in the First Chamber, and Lord Hugh Cecil then made a suggestion of an original and novel kind. He proposed that every Christian Church in the land as well as the Church of England should have accredited representatives in the House of Lords.

The proposal was treated more as a joke than anything else, and the brilliant Liberal cartoonist, Sir Frederick Carruthers Gould drew an amusing picture of the late Rev. Hugh Price Hughes (a prominent figure in Nonconformist circles) in full ecclesiastical dress and lawn sleeves walking into the House alongside the Archbishop of Canterbury. In fine, Lord Hugh's proposal was dissolved in general merriment. Yet there was a measure of logic on its side. If one religious sect is to have a share in making the laws of the country, why not other sects? Probably, of course, Lord Hugh's scheme, if given effect to, would have necessitated a reduction in the number of Bishops in the House of Lords to allow of proportional representation of the various branches of Methodism, of the Baptists, the Congregationalists, the Presbyterians, the Unitarians, the Quakers, the Christian Scientists, the Plymouth Brethren *et hoc genus omne*.

Let us, like Chadband, in a spirit of love seek to enquire what causes may exist for the perpetuation of this scandalous anachronism of priestly participation in national legislation. Perhaps it is that ardent monarchists among us regard the presence of Bishops in Parliament as a sort of protection or bulwark for the throne. Personally I regard this as rubbish; but rubbish is often the foundation of the views of many of the "faithful." Monarchism here is not identified with personal power; and it is established here because of the good sense of the present and former occupants of the Throne. "Divine right" went by the board in the seventeenth century. The limited constitutional system of monarchy which we now have serves us better than any absolute system ever served any other country; and, because we know that in any crisis the unmistakable demand of a united people must always be conceded, it has become firmly rooted in the midst of our institutions. The people who still call Charles I. a martyr one would suppose cannot be a very large section of the community; but one must remember that the most mystical religionists in the national church retain a rooted belief in the "divine right" of Kings.

Then again members of religious communities other than the Church of England, once convinced that it is impossible for themselves to secure clerical repre-

sentation in Parliament, are unwilling to disturb the *status quo* which at any rate secures some religious representation in Parliament, even if it be of only one sect. The Nonconformist wirepullers are very astute gentlemen who realize that a half of or even a third of a loaf is better than no bread! And they hope the time is approaching when by greater incorporating unions of ecclesiastical bodies, the argument for proportional representation in Parliament of all Churches will gradually lose its force. If they can establish one great Christian Church for the whole country, the argument will have no force at all.

From the point of view of the detached citizen, the continuance of Episcopal representation in the House of Lords spells reaction and retrogression; and it contains the dangerous germ of despotic revival. Priests have ever been the oiliest, cleverest and most insinuating of courtizans. They have never been the leaders of a campaign against tyranny. As Carlyle says in the *French Revolution*: "Our Church stands haltered, dumb, like a dumb ox; lowing only for provender (of tithes); content if it can have that; or with dumb stupor expecting its further doom." And later on: "The clergy have means and material; means, of number, organization, social weight; a material at lowest of public ignorance known to be the mother of devotion . . . Enough, the clergy has strength, the clergy has craft and indignation. It is a most fatal business this of the clergy. A weltering hydra-coil, which the national assembly has stirred up about its ears; hissing, stinging; which cannot be appeased, alive; which cannot be trampled dead!"

Does the arrogant spirit of clericalism die with the passage of the ages? Not it! Expressed or only implied the claim of the clerics is that they are supernaturally endowed and empowered to direct the lives and actions of others. Every other occupation of human beings sinks into subordination, subjection and insignificance to the priesthood, and must come into line with the behests of these preposterous self-styled godmen or men of God, everyone of whom is a pope at heart. Every pastor of every little Bethel in the land apes the posturings of his brethren, who represent the Government religion. Is it not true to say that clerical legislators constitute a deforming—ay, a blinding and obstructionist anachronism?

IGNOTUS.

THE INTENT OF AN AUTHOR.

Does it matter whether one knows what was the intent of the author? In the majority of cases, no . . .

In some cases, however, knowledge of the author's intent furnishes the key to the work. For example, Swift's *Guilliver's Travels* cannot be properly understood by anyone who fails to realize that Swift's intent was to satirize the follies of mankind. By the majority of people it is read (in part, only, as a rule) simply as a feat of imagination, an interesting sort of romance. These miss its essential value as a scathing indictment of the littleness, the hypocrisies, the crass egotism of man. It is a contribution to philosophy, a brilliant attack upon the anthropocentric view of the universe.

But can one really know the intent of the author? Not as a whole. Intent is not a single element of consciousness, but a complex of elements in a state of flux . . . The intent may change as the book grows. Cervantes began *Don Quixote* as a satire against the absurd notions of chivalry that had crept into the works of his predecessors and contemporaries, but it is quite likely that after a while the story itself "got hold of him," and the desire for artistic completeness replaced the first impulse of satire . . .

In view of the intense difficulty of knowing properly what was an author's intent, it is a great pity that so many critics profess profound knowledge upon it. For the main part what they do is to read their own ideas into the author . . .

E. H. Grout (in "Pilman's Journal").

Mud Flats and The Mud Thrower

Mr. Bradlaugh's Services to the Clydeside.

I AM one of those so-called Clydesiders. There is nothing to be ashamed of in that statement. It is not a confession of moral turpitude. Glasgow is no worse than some places, and is really better than most. There are the Irish, of course, both sorts, and some Jews. But there is also a number of Scotch!

Many Freethinkers seem to think that the stuff published in the newspapers about Freethinkers and Freethought is unworthy of notice. Pr-aps, pr-aps not. There are limits to what should be tolerated. Mud-slinging should be made a "dangerous trade," and not allowed to become a sinecure job.

Each of Glasgow's evening papers publishes an afternoon supplement on Saturdays. Nice tit-bitty stuff. What the new minister's wife—I mean, of course, the wife of the new minister—said when she reviewed the Girl Guides, and that sort of stuff. All true too, true as gospel, as Mr. Foote would have said.

In a recent issue of the *Evening News* Supplement there appeared an article entitled the "Clyde Mud Flats." To anyone with a knowledge of the flats, the subject is not very alluring. I have odorous memories of them. On a hot day . . . ! Yet the title attracted me and I read the article. And I am glad I did so.

The author, Mr. George Eyre-Todd, is described in *Who's Who* as Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, late lecturer on Scottish History in Glasgow Athenæum. The list of works written or edited by him contains about forty titles. He is a Conservative and a member of the Church of Scotland. He is a J.P. So often have the newspapers said that Mr. Eyre-Todd is an authority on Glasgow's History, that many people who should know better take it in. Those people never ask, what is an authority? If a man is an authority on motor-cars, why take his opinion as of equal worth on say, a question of Geology? I have taken our author and tested half a dozen statements of his. In every instance he is wrong and we are only dealing here with matters of fact. For instance, Golbourne (an eighteenth century engineer) made certain recommendations regarding deepening the River. "The result," says our author, "was doubtful and the scheme was abandoned." Answer—The scheme was not abandoned, it was very successful, and part of the work is still—150 years after—in existence. The dredgings were carried on in open floats and emptied off the mouth of Loch Long. So says Mr. Eyre-Todd. Answer—The dredgings were *not* carried to the mouth of Loch Long on floats (or punts) and were *never* at any time dumped off the mouth of the Loch. But I will return to this later. After some details of a dispute between Lord Blantyre and the Clyde Trustees, Mr. Eyre-Todd goes on to say that the practice of dumping was abandoned in "a curious and amusing way." A certain shipowner, now dead, disappointed at his failure to get elected a Clyde Trustee, threatened to make his exclusion a costly business for the Clyde Trust. Let me continue the story in the author's own words.

"At that time the late Charles Bradlaugh, M.P., was accustomed to spend part of the summer at Portincaple, the little rustic watering-place on the shore of Loch Long, opposite the mouth of Loch Gail. His favourite recreation was deep-sea fishing in the off-shore waters, and he complained, and the folk of the hamlet joined in the complaint, that the deposit of the dredgings in that neighbourhood not only spoiled the sport of the visitors and business of the fishermen, but

destroyed the amenities of the coast by casting up filth on the sea-beach. So persistently and effectively was the grievance urged, that the Clyde Trust was compelled to alter the entire system of disposal of the dredgings." Then he says that the square punts were scrapped. They were not. I saw some of them today. They were, he says, replaced by steam-driven hopper barges. They were not. The steam hoppers were, most of them twenty years old at the time in question. They carry the material to "off the coast of Arran." They do not! Three assertions and all wrong. The fact is that there was grumbling at the action of the Clyde Trust years before Mr. Bradlaugh appeared on the scene. The Trust took no notice, yet events proved that it only needed a forceful personality such as he possessed to carry the agitation to a successful ending. The dredgings were not dumped in deep water off the mouth of Loch Long, a story-teller says. They were carried up the Loch, a mile up, and from there to a point two and one-half miles further up, this refuse was dumped. Crude sewage and chemical works refuse, to the extent of ten thousand tons a week, year after year, dumped in the heart of one of the most wonderful scenes of mountain, land and water in all Scotland. I have often shown that Mr. Bradlaugh had a good case. I have shown that on matters of fact Mr. Eyre-Todd is not to be trusted. If he makes a personal investigation and finds the 'gossips' by whom he seems to swear, wrong, will he withdraw the insinuation? "According to the gossip of the time . . ." is not the way to write History. Mr Bradlaugh's action may or may not have been a costly thing for the Clyde authorities, I do not know. I do know that Mr. Bradlaugh improved the amenities of the shores of the Firth and river, and Mr. Eyre-Todd, as a good Clyde-sider like myself, ought to make full expression of his gratitude for that improvement. I have already done so and do it again. Will Mr. Eyre-Todd better the example?

AUTOLYCUS.

Acid Drops.

One of the avowed, but not of course the real, reasons for the settlement of the Jews in Palestine was to remove them from the persecution of bigoted Christians. But it is quite certain that Jews, so long as they remain true to their religion will be as ready to persecute as ever Christians were. From the *Jewish Chronicle* we learn that there was some rioting in Palestine owing to one lot of Jews trying to prevent another lot from playing football on the Sabbath. Really religious people never learn toleration from experiencing persecution, they are only the more anxious to prove that they can be as intolerant as their persecutors.

Things are getting "wuss and wusser" between Mussolini and the Pope. On June 20 the Pope made a further complaint of the treatment of some of the Catholic orders by the Facists. He said:—

It is not in Mexico and Bolshevik Russia alone that the Church is being persecuted. So far from peace or even negotiations looking to a possibility of peace is the situation that nine thousand units of the Fascist Party have been called out to keep watch over the youthful members of the Catholic Action Party in order to prevent the meeting even in silence. Bishops report a hateful intensification of watching and spying and of continual threats disturbing the life of the community.

Complaints from the Roman Church must always be carefully scrutinized. What the Papacy understands by persecution is very often the deprivation of the power to persecute, or when other sects are given equal rights. In this instance it is plain that Mussolini does not intend to give the Catholic Church a free hand in training the young, and will not tolerate the Church's interference in State matters. At the time when the papers were as-

claiming the healing of the breach between the Papacy and the Italian State, we pointed out that there were all the elements present of a very early rupture, and events have borne out what we then said.

An ancient inhabitant of Kent boasts or having been a Sunday school teacher for fifty years. When we think of the thousands of young intelligences which he has thus prevented from acquiring a civilized view of the world and life generally, we can only exclaim: "God may forgive him, we cannot." We only hope the Bible is true and he will be rewarded with the eternal boredom of singing hymns of praise around the Throne of Grace.

Writing in the *Methodist Recorder* on the Sunday Entertainment question, the Rev. Dr. E. J. B. Kirtlan says:—

As one who has lived ten years in the East End of London, and has come into close contact with the lives and opinions of the people, I desire to identify myself absolutely with Mr. Tiplady in the great fight he is putting up against cant and hypocrisy in many of us who call ourselves Christians. There is no doubt whatever we of the modern Churches are right up against it. Let anyone who doubts it come into Victoria Park on a Sunday afternoon when we are trying to preach the Gospel. He will find that it is almost impossible to preach "the Gospel"—the people won't have it at any price. They still have some respect (some of them) for the name and person of Jesus Christ, but they absolutely repudiate and abominate organized Churches, parsons, etc. Let the distinguished members of the Temperance and Social Welfare Department of our Church come down to Victoria Park any Sunday afternoon and talk about the "closing of cinemas" or "the censoring of films in the name of decency," and they will get the shock of their lives. They will find that the crowd to-day is very much more indignant at the "indecent" of people who "rack-rent" the poor than they are about the so-called "indecent" of the films.

Heading for more attention to the secular amusement side of the churches, a religious writer says: "People have a social as well as spiritual instincts, and we cannot expect one side of their nature to be cultivated if the other is starved." We fancy the average Nonconformist parson hardly needs this reminder. He knows that exploiting the social side of his adherents is one of his strongest means of keeping them attached to his church, especially the luke-warm religionists of the younger generation.

In his search for "Truth, Beauty, and Goodness," Dr. Alexander Irvine has discovered that Milton gives him little assistance:—

Paradise Lost puzzles me. The four musketeers, Lucifer, Belial, Moloch, and Mammon, are rather fascinating scoundrels, and of these Lucifer, of course, is the hero. I know nothing so absurd in all literature as the presentation of God as a swashbuckling major-general marshalling armies in Heaven; nor anything quite so insane as the dialogue between Jehovah and Adam in the garden. There are some fine things in Milton; but *Paradise Lost* is Milton at his worst.

Milton no doubt deserves this kind of criticism. It, however, overlooks the fact that Milton was a child of the religious age in which he was born, when the Bible was taken literally. He dramatized, and dressed in solemn and dignified language, a primitive fable and also the current notions about God. This may be repellant to our modernized Christians, but then they have the advantage of having had their notions about God and Creation (etc.) reformed and refined through the agency of sceptical criticism and ridicule.

Commander Kenworthy, M.P., has been interviewed by a Methodist journal as regards the alleged injurious effect of modern films. Concerning the question of censorship, he says that he does not want to see State censorship introduced if it can be avoided, because such State control would be in danger of being used politically, and also especially because the moving pictures ought to be considered as an art, and no one would desire censorship in that world. But if, he says, the cinemas will not put their own house in order, then State censorship is inevitable. He adds:—

Then, of course, there is a still worse serious aspect of the question, in view of the possible opening of all cinemas on Sundays. If that comes about, then all the more care will have to be exercised as to the moral character and possible effect of the screen. Films that might reasonably put in a good claim for week-day exhibition, would, many of them, undoubtedly offend the finer religious and moral sense if shown on Sunday. The whole question, in fact, bristles with both dangers and difficulties.

Apart from the possibility that the atmosphere of the English Sunday may have a deleterious effect on the films and cinema patrons, we don't quite see how what is shown on a week-day becomes worse on a Sunday. In any case, people with a "finer religious and moral sense" cannot possibly have their feelings outraged or offended. The godly will not attend the Sunday cinema. And they certainly have no right to dictate the kind of amusement other people shall enjoy on Sunday, or compel it to conform to religious prejudices and puritanical obsessions.

A reader of *Radio Times* says:—

It was an excellent suggestion . . . that the Time Signal of six "pips" be used to broadcast thoughts of "no more war." Still more effective than the words mentioned is likely to be the result if definite words of peace are used . . . no phrase more suitable could be chosen than the six words in which are translated the great Christmas message of language—"Peace on Earth, Goodwill towards men" . . . In the Eastern religions "mantrams" or set phrases are in similar manner repeated to bring about a desired result. . .

Our friend's faith in the abracadabra method of educating people to the Peace idea can hardly be based on a knowledge of history. For nineteen hundred years the Christian peoples have been taught to repeat annually the phrase "Peace on Earth, Goodwill to men." The net result was—war after war, and lastly, the greatest war this world has yet seen. The prescription is a quack remedy that has been tried and proved a failure. We hope, however, that other pious people will not be discouraged thereby from suggesting others of the same kind. They add a little gaiety to a sad world.

The Bishop of Southwark in a recently issued book of his, *In the Heart of South London*, says:—

In the Day School the children are taught simple hymn and prayer, but unfortunately the London County Council Syllabus for Religious Instruction is deplorably feeble, antiquated and out of date, of a far lower educational standard than what is required in any other department of teaching . . .

Well, the City Fathers surely ought not to be blamed for trying to make religion in their schools as "unsectarian" as possible. After all, the less religion there is taught, the less the possibility of its being sectarian! That is one way of obeying the law in the matter.

Writing about "the spiritual possibilities of Methodist Union," Mr. Moses Bourne, J.P., appears to be rather doubtful as to whether the various Methodists will shake down well together in the same sheep-pen. He expresses the hope that they will be broad in their outlook, tolerant in their sympathies, and charitable in their views. His misgiving on this score impels him to remind the united brethren of the future that: "The fact that a brother thinks differently from me does not of itself prove either of us wrong; it may only prove that both of us are exercising the God-given power of thinking." All this is very revealing. Such an exhortation to and plea for tolerance implied that intolerance among the Methodist sects is the rule, and not the exception. This is not surprising. Each Methodist brother believes, like most Christians, that his particular religious views and notions have been directly inspired in him by God, and are therefore the only true ones, and hence all others are false and dangerous. In these circumstances, intolerance, is inevitable. One of the cures for this disease is to bring the religionist into closer contact with broader minds outside the churches; another is, to weaken his religious belief. He cannot be cured by preaching at him.

If Freethinkers get very little show in the popular press they may perhaps find some satisfaction in that, in the more responsible periodical publications, such as the

monthly and quarterly reviews, their point of view is frequently put forward though not, as a rule, with any suggestion that it is theirs. Thus, to give a few topical examples, the *Contemporary Review* contains an article by Mr. W. Horsfall Carter on the Spanish Republic, which agrees with what was said here a week or two ago. "The reversion of feeling against the King had indeed acquired an amazing momentum during the last few months, and we know how entirely oblivious of the real state of opinion Don Alfonso remained right up to the last moment. He could but sit on the wall, made of steel as he thought, formed by the Church and the Army, the two pillars of the eighteenth century State, which was the only form of Government he knew or understood." Mr. Carter adds that "this gets rid of the legend of the penny press that Alfonso was popular and clever."

In the *Quarterly Review* there is another example. This time an article (by Mr. Claude Mullins) on "Perjury." Referring to the Act of 1898, that gave persons charged the right to give evidence in their own behalf, Mr. Mullins says, "few of us to-day take the view that it is the function of the Courts to protect a man's soul at the risk of endangering his body . . . Our modern system is based on the belief that every one must have the chance of telling the truth on oath" (and, of course, on affirmation) "his soul being a matter between himself and God, and not a matter for the care of the Courts." And (in the *Hibbert Journal* of all places in the world) we have an article on the "humanizing" of Christ, in which, incidentally, that bastard connexion of Christian-Socialism, of which Frederick Denison Maurice is supposed to have been one of the founders, gets a nasty knock. For it seems that that rev. gentleman, so far from being a socialist thought and said that "dynastic monarchy was a witness to the perpetuity of God's Government," and that "the sovereignty of the people is one of the vilest and most blasphemous of contradictions." Some Socialist!

At Amersham, a memorial was unveiled to martyrs who were burned. The newspaper record is useful and interesting if only to show that people in the present are not burned for their religious views, but, to the curious minded the report is incomplete. A President of the Protestant Alliance was present at the ceremony, and the reader can draw his own conclusions. Catholicism is receiving a set-back at present; people are not even as stupid as the newspapers make out, and the reason for the omission in the report is obvious.

Identity of interests must explain the calling in of Mr. Gibson Young by Methodism. This gentleman took the place of the Rev. George McNeal and led the singing at a City Road Chapel. It is an outward and visible sign of an alliance that has been known for years.

The brotherly love, the talk about which makes the average man sick, was manifest at St. Michael's Church, Lamb-in-Rossendale, Lancashire. The vicar had to call in the police, at a service, and people were ejected. We trust that the prominent exponents of religion will remember this incident when they roll their eyes and hold forth on the superiority of their faith over Freethought that does not condone or rejoice in rowdiness in matters of opinion.

Apropos of the Primitive Methodist Conference, a religious journal says:—

The things that ought to be faced are: how to improve the prayer-life of the Church; the vitalizing of public services; the rekindling of a passion for souls and the quickening of the Christian conscience on the question of how to lead men to Christ. Can our brethren show the way out from the soul-deadening indifference that prevails in relation to great spiritual verities?

This appears to be something in the way of an admission that the majority of chapel adherents are only luke-warm Christians. One gathers that the flaming material for setting the country alight with religion is missing in the chapels. Have all those wonderful newspaper articles on religion been written for nothing? Love's labour lost!

The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Liverpool says that a "poor woman" came to him with a hundred pounds for his cathedral. When asked whether she could afford it she replied, "Of course I can afford it. Whenever I give anything to God I get it back." We would not care to question the word of an Archbishop, but we had no idea that Liverpool possessed poor women who could so lightly give away a sum of £100. Of course, if she knew that God would give it back to her the gift was more or less of a sham. In this case God did give it back, because a few days later she won £100 in the Irish Sweepstake. If she had given £30,000 she would have taken a first prize.

But this kind of thing is not fair. On the Grand National Sweepstake we had to protest against the statement of the *Universe* that St. Anthony interfered in the drawing by seeing that some who appealed for his help drew prizes. That was not fair to the other ticket-holders. Now we have God Almighty taking a hand, and because a woman gave a hundred pounds to a cathedral he sees that she gets it back again. We think that in future the Irish Sweepstake promoters should give a guarantee that neither Father, Son, nor Holy Ghost nor any of the saints should take a hand in the draw. Meanwhile we commend this to the attention of Mr. Clynes, and particularly to Mr. Macdonald, who shed Presbyterian tears over the prospect of so many people risking their money in the "Sweep." If God sees nothing wrong in it why should either of these gentlemen?

The last report of the Central Board of Finance of the Church of England complains that there is no obligation on the part of statesmen to "provide buildings for the worship of God." The complaint is, apparently, that when new towns are laid out by local authorities no provisions are made for churches. The complaint is interesting and illuminating. It reveals what the Church really wants, and also the fact of the growing tendency to treat religion as purely personal dissipation, with which the State has no concern. We sympathize with these when they find local authorities providing spaces for sports grounds, etc., and leaving religious buildings out of account altogether. And only the parsons seem upset about it. The rest of the population does not appear to be seriously concerned.

That "gentlemen," so called, are the masters of "Billingsgate" is effectively illustrated in a notice in the old *Gentleman's Magazine* of a review of an elegy on Shelley published in 1822, by a young Canterbury bookseller under the pseudonym of "Arthur Brooke." Says that defunct organ of gentility:—

Mr. Brooke who has written some good but licentious verses, has here got up a collection of stanzas, for the ostensible purpose "of commemorating the talents and virtues of that highly-gifted individual Percy Bysshe Shelley." Concerning the talents of Mr. Shelley, we know no more than that he published certain convulsive caperings of Pegasus labouring under choleric pains, namely, some purely fantastic verses, in the bubble, toil and trouble style; and as to Mr. Shelley's virtues, if he belonged (as we understand he did) to a junta, whose writings tend to make our sons prodigals and our daughters strumpets, we ought as justly to regret the decease of the Devil (if that were possible), as of one of his coadjutors. Seriously speaking, however, we feel no pleasure in the untimely death of this Tyro of the Juan school, that pre-eminent academy of Infidels, Blasphemers, Seducers, and Wantons.

Quite in the style of the late Rev. Dr. Torrey.

The Rev. Worsley-Boden does us the courtesy of sending a copy of his Parish Magazine (North Wungfield), in which he quotes from us—half-approvingly—the sentence, "It needs a very strong belief in the Christian hell to make the Christian heaven attractive." Mr. Worsley-Boden says this is written with "some justification," but would have been written with greater truth had we said "traditional" instead of "Christian." All we have to say is that traditional Christianity is real Christianity. There is no use in writing about the consequences of a Christianity that has never existed.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

FREETHINKER ENDOWMENT TRUST.—F. Drummond (Toronto),

W. Sissons.—Very pleased to learn of Mr. Whitehead's successful meetings in Bolton.

R. A. McDONALD (Johannesburg).—Thanks. Shall appear as early as possible.

R. M. LAL.—Sorry, but your communication is too lengthy for the space at our disposal.

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

Sugar Plums.

Vigilance is the price of retaining liberty. There is a movement on in New York State in which the Department of Education is joining hands with the heads of different sects to provide religious instruction in the schools. A protest against this has been sent to the authorities by the Teacher's Union signed by its President, Mr. Harry R. Linville. We commend this action to the very timid National Union of Teachers in this country which never appears to get very indignant save when it is a purely Trades Union question of lowering salaries.

We have received a supply from New York of *The Bible Unmasked*, by Joseph Lewis. The book has, we understand, had a large sale in America, and caused much controversy. Mr. Lewis does not mince matters when dealing with the Christian Fetish Book, and British readers should be interested in it. The book is very handsomely got up, and we are able to supply copies at the reduced price of 5s. post free. Only a limited number are for sale.

Mr. F. W. Haughton writes, "I have just read your *Christianity and Labour*, 1931 edition. It is the most appealing picture I have ever read. I am ordering a few more copies for distribution among my friends." We are pleased to say that although this is the third edition of the work, it is selling remarkably well.

Judging from the orders received from Japan for some of the Pioneer Press publications, there must be a fairly large number of Freethinkers among the educated Japanese. Soon after the publication of Mr. Cohen's *Materialism Re-stated*, a wholesale house in Japan sent us a fairly large supply. Now our business manager advertises us of another good sized order from the same quarter for *God and the Universe*. The second edition

of this is now on sale. There has been a little delay in supplying orders of the cloth copies, but a supply has now been received from the binders and all orders discharged.

Messrs Watts & Co., have just added two more shilling volumes to their useful Thinker's Library. The first is *The Pathetic Fallacy*, a study of the history of Christianity, which was noted in these columns on its first appearance—in a dearer form. The second is Anatole France's *Penguin Island*. If everyone read what she or he ought to have read, there would be very few copies of his work sold, as all would already know it by heart. But as only the small minority have read what they should have read, the majority deserve to be doubly damned if they do not immediately order a copy of one of the wittiest of modern works.

The same firm has also issued *God and Mammon, the Relations of Religion and Economics*, by J. A. Hobson, 1s. There is no need to commend anything of Mr. Hobson's dealing with either economics or sociology, whether one agrees with it or not. But to us the present essay is sadly marred by the quite unscientific readiness to fall into line with the fantastic notion of some form of Christianity—of which history has quite failed to preserve any trace—which embodied a sane and human social theory. The notion that the Christian Church at any time stood for the protection of labour, the care of the poor and the unfortunate is one of those minor superstitions upon which the prestige of present-day Christianity lives. The Church protected its own, as did other owners of labour, and exploited its own as did the others. One is still more surprised to find sympathetic reference to "the principles which underlay the claims of the medieval Church to regulate industry and commerce in accordance with the organic theory of a sound society." There was no social theory, as such, connected with the Medieval Church or with a genuine Christianity. And Mr. Hobson's pages furnish no evidence of any such thing. On the contrary he bears ample evidence to the greed, the cruelty, the self-seeking of the medieval Church. To idealize an essentially retrogressive agency is one of the worst services a reformer can do.

In the course of a kindly notice of the Annual Conference of the National Secular Society, the *Literary Guide* for July—an excellent number by the way—expresses surprise at the Annual Report saying that the National Secular Society is the only Society in this country which continues "the Freethought work of Bradlaugh." It considers this misleading, and reminds us that the Board of the R.P.A. include Mrs. Bradlaugh Bonner and her son, and that Mr. J. M. Robertson are connected with the organization. As our columns prove we have every appreciation of the work of the Rationalist Press Association, but the meaning of the sentence cited from the Report is quite clear. The N.S.S. is a distinctly anti-religious organization, and stands for an Atheistic view of life. It is Freethinking in the fullest sense of the term—the sense in which Bradlaugh used the word. We have always understood that the Rationalist Press Association does not take up this position. If we are mistaken we shall welcome gladly the correction. No one would be better pleased at such a correction than ourselves.

But if we are right, then the passage in the Report is correct. We can hardly regard the association of Bradlaugh's daughter and grandson, and Mr. John M. Robertson with a Society as proof that that Society is carrying on Bradlaugh's Freethinking work. Mrs. Bradlaugh Bonner and Mr. Robertson are connected with other Associations, we suspect, but that cannot be regarded as proof that these associations are carrying on Bradlaugh's work as is the N.S.S.

Every organization that works for the liberalizing of thought may in a general sense be said to be helping along the work of mental emancipation, which was one effect of Bradlaugh's work, and this generalization would embrace even the liberal section of the Christian Church.

But so far as the definite Atheistic Freethinking of Bradlaugh is concerned the National Secular Society stands as the spear point of the movement, and is the only organization that avows a definitely anti-religious and atheistic aim. That is what was meant by the sentence cited from the Annual Report. It was written without the slightest desire to cast reflection upon any other organization whatsoever, but as a statement of simple fact and to incite the members of the N.S.S. to live up to their heritage. There is no implied denial that the Rationalist Press Association has not "contributed to carrying on the work of Bradlaugh"—every movement that makes in our direction is doing this, and we are constantly chronicling these steps, made in the most unexpected places. It is the specific character of the work of the N.S.S., its exemplification of the Bradlaugh motto of "Thorough," with its war against religion in all its forms, that entitles it to the proud, but at present, solitary distinction of publicly carrying on his work.

Elsewhere in this issue we record the death of one of our American subscribers, Mr. Rayne Adams. Since receiving the notice of his death an unfinished letter intended for us has been found among his papers, which has been sent us, and which runs as follows:—

The approaching fiftieth anniversary of the *Freethinker* is one which brings me joy and regret. Certainly the paper has had an admirable career; yet when I think of how nearly coeval the *Freethinker* and I happen to be, it is quite natural to regret that although the *Freethinker* may do another fifty years good work, I shall not be about to congratulate it on its achievement. One of the most agreeable characteristics of the *Freethinker* is its insistence upon a proper recognition of the obscure Freethinkers who were the heralds of modern rationalism. And it is because of this admirable characteristic that I am sure you will not take exception to my pointing out an error in the recent speech at the N.S.S. Annual Dinner as reported in the *Freethinker* for January 25, where it was stated that in the whole period of periodical literature there had been only one Freethought paper—the American *Truthseeker*—that had been able to put fifty years of existence behind it.

As one interested in the pioneers of Freethought, I am moved to call attention to the fact that the *Boston Investigator*, published at Boston, Mass., U.S.A., was founded in 1830 by Abner Kneeland, and continued an unbroken existence until 1906. Kneeland was imprisoned for blasphemy in 1839. His successor was Horace Seaver, who edited the paper from 1839 until his death in 1889. With him was associated Josiah P. Mendum from 1838 to 1891. Ernest Mendum had taken a place on the staff in 1874 and carried the paper on to 1898, when Lemuel K. Washburn became its editor and so remained until 1906, when the paper was amalgamated with the *Truthseeker*. But, before its absorption, the *Boston Investigator* had maintained an independent existence as a forthright exponent of Freethought for seventy-five years. When the *Freethinker* was founded in 1881, the *Investigator* was already fifty years old.

We had overlooked the lengthy existence of the *Boston Investigator*, although we mentioned the case of the *Truthseeker* as being older than ourselves. But we were not inaccurate as we said that ours was the only European Freethought paper that had existed for fifty years, and that is correct.

An American friend desires to send his daughter, from the States, to an English speaking school in Switzerland. Perhaps some of our readers may know of a suitable institution to which a young girl might be sent. In that case we should be greatly obliged to hear from them.

We note an interesting letter from Mr. J. G. Bartram, Secretary of the Newcastle Branch N.S.S., in the *Northern Echo*, in reply to the Rev. Dr. Berry's article on "Here and Hereafter," which appeared in the same paper. It is a pity that Mr. Bartram did not sign it as Secretary of the local Branch. It is well to keep the Society's name before the public on all possible occasions.

Solitude is as needful to the imagination as society is wholesome for the character.—*Lowell*.

The Prince of Scottish Sceptics.

II.

DAVID HUME's contributions to pure philosophy made his name immortal. From various points of view his critical analysis of theological assumptions remains equally important. In his celebrated *Essay on Miracles* the scepticism elsewhere expressed in his writings concerning the certainty of the relationship of cause and effect is completely ignored. The orderly procession of natural phenomena which forms our sensations of the external world is surveyed in terms of pure rationalism.

Hume argues that our anticipations of future happenings are based on our memories of past experiences. Consequently, all our expectations repose upon our almost instinctive belief that the future will more or less resemble the past. From the earliest stages of childhood, Hume urges, this confidence in the constancy of Nature is strengthened by our experiences until, as the end of our lives approaches, we suspect that life has no new sensations in store. And when in reviewing the records of human life we discover how comparatively uniform the histories of nations have been; that when viewed in their real perspective, the wars and convulsions which seemed so strange and eventful to the generations that witnessed them are merely the transient agitations of orderly progress; and that every social and economic structure is unceasingly linked in an endless chain of natural causation. However minutely we study the past, no break is ever observed in the relationship of cause and consequence. Moreover, our hourly and daily experiences of Nature's uniformity, and the fact that every aspect of common life reposes on our unswerving confidence in its continuity has made almost axiomatic the belief of all sane men that natural causation has operated in the past, prevails in the present, and will continue throughout all coming ages. Therefore, when it is asserted that marked interruptions in the orderly sequences of nature have occurred, it seems a quite reasonable request that those who declare the possibility of miracles should at least advance evidence in support of that statement, not merely equal to, but superior to that which constrains all thoughtful men to regard the order of Nature as uniform in character.

Hume's scepticism concerning the miraculous is complete. He very logically considers miracles as sheer violations of the laws of Nature. These supernatural occurrences are almost invariably confined to credulous and uncultured communities. Many, most certainly, are traceable to priestly contrivance, while others evolve from that love of the marvellous so dear to the heart of common humanity. Now, are there any miracles on record which respond to the plain requirements of logic and morality? Hume's answer is unequivocal. "There is not to be found in all history," he avers, "any miracle attested by a sufficient number of men, of such unquestionable goodness, education, and learning, as to secure us against all delusion in themselves; of such undoubted integrity, as to place them beyond all suspicion of any design to deceive others; of such credit and reputation in the eyes of mankind, as to have a great deal to lose in case of their being detected in any falsehood; and at the same time attesting facts, performed in such a public manner, and in so celebrated a part of the world, as to render the detection unavoidable: All which circumstances are required to give us a full assurance of the testimony of men."

In common with his eminent contemporary, Edward Gibbon, Hume wields the weapon of irony with devastating effect. Yet many very solemn people have been misled by the surface praises of fashionable

superstition contained in the writings of these scornful sceptics. On more than one occasion the writer has heard Christian evidencers quote, and even misquote, several of the most pitilessly ironical passages from the famous fifteenth and sixteenth chapters of the *Decline and Fall* as testimonies of the infidel to the beauties and glories of the current religion. So, the sophisticated Whately pressed Hume into the service of revealed religion. The clerical logician does not cite the sceptical Scot, but his essay on the *Revelation of a Future State* was clearly inspired by Hume's booklet *On the Immortality of the Soul*, which was withheld from publication until after its author's death.

In this essay Hume remarks that "By the mere light of reason it seems difficult to prove the immortality of the soul: the arguments for it are commonly derived either from metaphysical topics or moral or physical." And he ironically proceeds: "But it is the Gospel and the Gospel alone, that has brought life and immortality to light."

Dealing with post-mortem rewards and punishments Hume inquires why, in terms of justice, bane or blessing should be extended beyond the grave. So far as the reasoning faculty guides us, no conclusive argument has ever been advanced that the mind or spirit survives the death and decay of the body. Moreover, in terms of pure reason all Nature's contrivances point to the conclusion that man's conscious existence "is limited to the present life."

Some who have controverted the doctrine of man's mortality contend that the mental and moral capacities of humanity never find full scope in our earthly home, and that a grander theatre of life in the spiritual realm is required for their complete realization. But Hume answers that much as the lower animals need all their native qualities to meet the exacting demands of existence, so man's various capacities are all called into requisition to enable him to cope with the many trials and sufferings which seem inseparable from human life.

Man's mind and body are plainly adapted to planetary existence, and to that alone. The fortunes, misfortunes and tragedies of life arise from causes over which we can exercise little influence. Again, if God created everything he is the author of good and evil alike. How monstrous then becomes the doctrine that the sins and shortcomings of finite men should suffer eternal torture. All civilized communities' penal codes tend to proportion the punishment to the nature of the crime. Frail men's concepts of justice thus rise superior to those attributed to the divine creator and ruler of the universe. Furthermore, "Heaven and hell suppose two distinct species of men, the good and the bad, but the greatest part of mankind float betwixt vice and virtue. Were one to go round the world with the intention of giving a good supper to the righteous and a sound drubbing to the wicked, he would frequently be embarrassed in his choice."

Hume was a logical and consistent determinist, and the case he presented in favour of necessity, as opposed to the liberty or freedom of man's will, is as impregnable as that of the great Deist, Anthony Collins, or that of that mercilessly consistent Calvinist, Jonathan Edwards.

That all the ordinary affairs of life are governed by circumstances no sane man really disputes. We have no choice in our birth and upbringing. No child ever decides whether it be delivered of healthy or diseased stock. Our religion is usually determined by the age and country in which we happen to be born. And in the later years of life all our deliberate actions are due to the operations of the motive which is for the moment uppermost. There exists apparently a certain

element of choice, but this is invariably determined by the more powerful motive or desire. The common libertarian assertion that one is free to choose may be met in several ways. As Thomas Huxley inquires: "But what determines your likings and dislikings? Did you make your own constitution? Is it your contrivance that one thing is pleasant and another is painful? And even if it were, why did you prefer to make it after the one fashion rather than the other? The passionate assertion of the consciousness of their freedom, which is the favourite refuge of the opponents of the doctrine of necessity, is mere futility, for nobody denies it. What they really have to do if they would upset the necessarian argument, is to prove that they are free to associate any emotion whatever with any idea whatever; to like pain as much as pleasure; vice as much as virtue; in short to prove, that whatever may be the fixity of order in the universe of things, that of thought is given over to chance."

Hume infers the existence of God from the evidences of his handiwork displayed in Nature. Yet, he at times concedes that men's ideas of the deity, when subjected to philosophical analysis become very vague and indefinite. Indeed, had Hume lived on to the days of Darwin, the shadowy Theism of his later life would in all probability have evaporated into the attenuated atmosphere of Agnosticism. In his *Dialogues* Hume makes Philo say, "that there is no ground to suppose a plan of the world to be formed in the Divine mind, consisting of distinct ideas, differently arranged, in the same manner as an architect forms in his head the plan of a house which he intends to execute." But to this and other sceptical arguments no adequate answer is made.

T. F. PALMER.

The Church Militant.

Prebendary Gough and his Incendiary Stuff.

To Prebendary A. W. Gough must be awarded the palm for perhaps the most revolting and villainous doctrine that could disgrace even a Christian bigot. In these days of weary and disheartened disillusionment, when all our fond war-time dreams of a new and better world are gone down the winds of political chicanery, and post-war diplomats who have learnt nothing new, and forgotten nothing of their bad old ways go on creating danger centres all over the world, from the lips of a Christian priest comes the gospel of bloody militarism pure and undefiled. Speaking at a meeting of the Navy League—a body of reactionary militarists—he extolled the Navy as the arm of righteousness and humanity, and declared, "There is no religious background to pacifism whatever!" Perhaps not. There is a moral sanction behind the desire for world peace, but that is a very different thing from Christian religiosity as expounded by this dignitary of the Church Militant.

Hark again to this most pious Christian war-monger! "There is no defence in weakness." (Compare Matthew v. xxxix). "This country suffers itself by damnable sentiment. Sentiment will not save the nation." Is this another "re-interpretation" of the Gospel of the Prince of Peace?

One thing is certain, even if "the rest is lies," and that is that if sentiment will not save the nation, the bloody-minded Christianity of Gough and his precious Navy Leaguers will certainly destroy it, and humanity as well. But after all, one might as reasonably expect grapes from thorns and figs from thistles as look to the priesthood for moral guidance, for social leadership, for any disinterested sense of the real needs of weary humanity, for anything whatever save a keen eye to their own sordid interests. None but a priest of a State-supported hierarchy could so shamelessly put this narrow nationalism before the real crying need of all mankind. I care little for the

nation, and less for the Church; I care more for humanity, and I am more anxious that true civilization should be saved than that the divine right of Britain to the hegemony of the world should be maintained at the cost of millions of innocent lives. I hope I am as patriotic as the next man; but I consider that the preservation of the peace of the world is cheaply purchased at the price of the superiority of any one nation, even should that nation be my own. But the charity of Prebendary Gough, like most Christian charity, begins at home—and stays there.

It was this same Gough who, at the time of the air-raids, advocated "a systematic policy of reprisals," meaning the murder of German non-combatants, "from a Christian standpoint." Truly the leopard cannot change his spots, nor the Ethiopian his skin; nor has this Christian barbarian abated one jot or tittle of his blood-lust. After sixteen years he runs true to form. The miseries, the sufferings, the wrecked dreams and blighted hopes of the post-war world have not softened his heart, nor opened his eyes to the open eed of mankind. This type of Christian is made of sterner stuff. Indeed, his pugnacious Christianity has borne fruit in the approbation of his superiors, for he has achieved promotion since the days when he advocated the cowardly murder of German women and children.

Is there no decency, no moral sense, no human feeling in this man, that he can preach this villainous philosophy of "blood and iron" and still square it with the Sermon on the Mount? Have we sacrificed the cream of the nation's youth to defeat Prussian militarism, only to borrow its philosophy and put its exponents in high positions in the State Church? What a hellish farce! What a ghastly mockery of the ideals for which the youth of Britain laid down their lives at the bidding of priests and politicians! Could the ghosts of Bismarck and Bernhardi have visited that meeting of the Navy League, what would have been their glee to see this triumphant vindication of their philosophy, once so fervently denounced from thousands of British pulpits! Well might they have congratulated each other on this proof that for all our lip-service to the ideal of Peace the doctrine of the mailed fist still reigns supreme in the councils of nations.

It is an illuminating sidelight on the social value of organized Christianity that one of its priests can preach this anti-social gospel and escape being driven from his position with the execration of all right-thinking men. I will not split hairs now over a question of terminology; if for once we hold a candle to the devil and identify "religion" with moral idealism and our human aspirations to order and happiness and peace, if the problem of the peace of the soul and the co-ordination of the conflicting passions of mankind to the common end of human betterment be admitted to be the function of religion, as H. G. Wells and Julian Huxley would have us believe, then I will cheerfully admit that this type of religion in the minds of politicians and the public would be a powerful influence towards the inauguration of peace on earth and good-will to men. I can applaud the Christianity that inspired John Howard and Florence Nightingale and the gentle Humanism of the Society of Friends; but the Christianity of Gough is calculated to make any decent man almost physically sick.

Christianity is the most plastic and the most hypocritical of all superstitions. It is all things to all men. It shows the world a thousand different faces and speaks with a thousand different tongues. It has inspired all social types from Torquemada to Elizabeth Fry. It has given a sanction for the doctrines of every type of sectarianism, ranging from the filthy asceticism of the early Church to the Free-love maniacs of the modern American Bible-belt. It is the sanction of Quaker pacifism, and also of Gough's beastly militarism; and in this latter capacity it has always and everywhere been the curse of the world, for it provides a sanction and an excuse for mankind's worst passions and surrounds tyranny, national selfishness, greed, fraud, slander, and murder with the odour of sanctity. As long as men believe it and parsons like Gough, morally blind and deaf to the voice of conscience can be found to preach it, civilization will never be safe. The cursed thing must, for humanity's sake, be rooted out and destroyed; not by

force or persecution, even should the power to do so be in our hands, for that would be but to adopt the methods of Torquemada, but by education and by appealing to the conscience of mankind. Men like Gough, evidently are incapable of being civilized; Nature has denied them the barest rudiments of the conscience to which the ideal of peace must make its appeal; but we may thank whatever gods may be that such men are rare. To-day there are a vast body of men and women who are emancipated from Church control, decent human people with human feelings and consciences to whom World Peace and Freedom and Happiness could be made a goal worth striving for, something more than the meaningless nonsense which the militarists deem them to be. To this vast public, misled as they may be by a venial Press and time-serving politicians, Freethought and Pacifism must take their appeal, and it may be that a day will come when men like Gough will be looked upon with universal contempt as an atavism, throwbacks to a bygone Dark Age of brute force which can never return.

C. V. LEWIS.

A True Story.

SCENE: A "Green Line" motor coach travelling to London. Amongst other occupants a young lady aged about twenty-eight years. On her lap lies a weekly paper closed. She has been reading it; but the day is fine and the view from the window attracts her.

The coach stops. A few passengers get out; others enter. One of the latter takes the vacant seat next to our heroine. The coach moves on. After a while the peculiar contortions and neck twistings of her neighbour disturb our heroine's reverie. It is forced upon her that she has become the object of his inquisitive and intrusive scrutiny. She turns to see what sort of person it is. The person is a parson! The following dialogue ensues:—

Parson: I beg your pardon; but it grieves me to see a young lady like you with that paper in your hands.

Young Lady: Why?

P.: Because you surely can't be in agreement with the views of a paper of that sort.

Y.L.: So it grieves you to find people who read opinions with which they might differ—is that it?

P. (avoiding the question): Then you do disagree with its views?

Y.L.: On the contrary! But have you ever read it?

P.: Certainly not. And I wouldn't dream of doing so.

Y.L.: Then how can you tell what sort of a paper it is?

P.: I can see well enough from the title that it is not a fit paper to read.

Y.L.: Do you always judge the contents of a paper by its title?

To this question there is no reply—unless sounds of a guttural nature, combined with a twitching of the fingers and a hunching of the shoulders, be taken as a reply. A silence ensues. Presently the coach slows down and the parson prepares to leave. Again he addresses the young lady.

P.: Would you do something, my dear, to please an old man?

Y.L.: That depends on what the "something" is.

P.: Don't read that paper any more.

Y.L.: You ask me to give up reading a paper which you admit you have never read yourself! Now I suggest that you might do something to please a young lady—take this copy and read it properly.

P. (rising hurriedly): No, no! Never!

(Readers may like to guess the name of the weekly which the young lady was reading. No prizes offered for correct guess.)

To look fearlessly upon life; to accept the laws of nature, not with meek resignation, but as her sons, who dare to search and question; to have peace and confidence within our souls—these are the beliefs that make for happiness.—Maeterlinck.

Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

MADAME BLAVATSKY.

SIR,—Referring to your recent review of Mr. Bechofer Roberts' book, *The Mysterious Madame*, it seems a pity that slanders which have been refuted over and over again, and which have no basis save in the malice of enemies, should be revived for no apparent reason, save perhaps the endeavour once more to cater to the public taste for such reading.

It has always been recognized that to slander a dead person is one of the most despicable actions. The author's intent is but thinly veiled under a pretence of impartiality; and he entirely fails to deal with the really important aspects of the life of this remarkable woman, the originator of the world-wide religio-philosophical movement known as *Theosophy*. He entirely fails to assign any reason for the life of martyrdom for her cause which she suffered. The literature which she gave to the world, and which has shed a new light on the problems of life for thousands of earnest students of these problems, receives from him a mere casual passing notice; whilst it must be evident to anyone who can really appreciate that literature and its influence in the world, that a debased character such as he endeavours to represent her to be is utterly incompatible with its spiritual quality.

It is by that literature and its influence in the world that she should be judged now, and will be judged by posterity; whatever one may think of her personal character. Perhaps, like other pioneers, it may be two or three centuries before her influence on the thought of the age will be clearly recognized and acknowledged; but the increasing demand for her works, of which new editions are continually being issued, would seem to indicate that the recognition of her genius is already well assured, notwithstanding all that her traducers have endeavoured to do.

In your closing paragraph you say that "It would be interesting to learn the opinion of orthodox Theosophy on this interesting and revealing life story." Now there is no such thing as "orthodox Theosophy." What I have just stated, however, represents to some extent the opinions of those who knew H. P. Blavatsky personally, and who are the members of our Association; as well as the opinion of many others who have made a close study of her works.

As this is the centenary of her birth, our Association is republishing a considerable volume of testimony to her noble character and the value of her work and message, written by a large number of her immediate friends and pupils directly after her death in 1891. We shall be happy to send you a copy of this for review as soon as it is published.

IONA DAVEY,

For the Council of the Blavatsky Association.

CONCERNING JESUS-BAR-JOSEPH.

SIR,—In your issue of March 15 just to hand, there is an article called "A Life of Jesus," by Mr. A. R. Williams, which shows a slight absence of knowledge regarding the latest scientific research in this matter, and may perhaps mislead some of your readers. It is like someone who never heard of Christopher Columbus writing about the discovery of America, or who never heard of Copernicus writing a history of astronomy. Dr. Binet-Sanglé, of Paris, has gone to the trouble of investigating the career of Jesus-bar-Joseph of Nazareth, and has published four volumes covering his researches in the matter. There is also an abridged edition in one volume. Apparently Mr. Williams has not heard of this, and he is not the only one. I have invited the attention of many well known writers in Great Britain and the U.S.A. to this work which is the most sensational and epoch-marking that has appeared for years. Many of them admitted they had not heard of the work.

Why it should be left to me, away (from an up-to-date literary and scientific standpoint) in an obscure corner of the world like Australia to invite the attention of the great ones of the earth to the work of Binet-Sanglé is be-

yond my comprehension. I see many of the literary periodicals from the northern hemisphere, but have not yet come across a word in them regarding this work of the French Professor, and am amazed because it pulverizes all notions of the "myth theory" of the "Messiah," and makes the various lives by Renan, Papini, Ludwig and Bruce Barton look positively foolish. If, as Lionel Britton says, we must push thought up to the human plane, this book of Binet-Sanglé's should help. It abolishes a lot of current values at one swoop. It is anti-theological "T.N.T.," which when it properly explodes will do to religion what Mr. G. Fawkes would have done to the boys upstairs if he hadn't kept his matches and loosely corked beer in the same pocket.

R. MCKAY.

Sydney, Australia.

Obituary.

MR. RAYNE ADAMS.

We regret to hear of the death of Mr. Rayne Adams, of New York. He had been a reader of the *Freethinker* for many years, and a consistent Atheist. The following extracts from an address delivered at his cremation by an old friend of his, is sent us by another friend of Mr. Adams, Edward H. Davies.

"Rayne Adams never thought the problem of death as large or as important as the problem of life. To that he gave sincere and earnest thinking. His living, always personal, frank, and direct, was a simple and unforced expression of a will that knew itself and felt no dependence on common custom as a guide. It was a loyalty—always honest, to the point of bravery, and often sensitive, to the point of sacrifice—a loyalty to his identification of truth. The rule was simple—being profound—and, as is always so, the application was a test of complex alternatives. Here is where most men capitulate—by avoidance, or concealment, or compromise. He did not capitulate. He knew no hypocrisy. He would not compromise. Thus he stood to us all as a pre-eminent figure—notable always, the more loveable as the more known, and admirable in that love."

I have a paper which he wrote some years ago in contemplation of this day. One paragraph I will read:—

"I believe in democracy; in individualism in thought and work. I believe in Secularism. I believe that the foundation of all society is the biological fact of sympathy; that social betterment depends upon the extension of sympathy; and that this extension of sympathy comes only through the widest education; and that, finally, this education, to be effective, must be free; that is, it must be the expression of free thinking on all and any subjects. I 'accept all religions and believe none.' As for the question of personal immortality, or 'life after death,' this matter has never interested me greatly so far as I am personally concerned; if 'one' lives after death, it is, after all, only a fact of nature, and in no way, to my belief, it is dependent, as a proposition, upon any system or theory of supernaturalism."

It is in the emotional life that the bounty of living consists. His emotions ran deep and were quietly revealed. Characteristically, therefore, he responded to music and to poetry. There is a selection of verse, in the publication of which he joined with a small group of kindred feeling, now a quarter of a century ago. From it, I read this, for our own satisfaction.

In it, too, the thought of death comes not seldom—always happy, welcome, and like a friend. He had read often the ecstatic ode of Whitman, to Death. It will restore a rich memory of sincere and enthusiastic days to recall his pleasure in these lines of the Hymn to Proserpine.

(Swinburne: "O daughter of earth" . . . to end.)

And to this I add a verse from another page:—

("Margaritae Sorori," last verse: Henley.)

To his spirit, still pervasive and always controlling, we need to add no word of commentary. With each one of us, he built a strong motive in our lives. It stays, ever fresh, in our love for him. And that love shall last so long as we live.

In accordance with his wish, we now consign his body to the flames, that it may return to the elements whence it came.

Society News.

We have received a good account of Mr. J. T. Brighton's handling of the case for Secularism in a debate with a Wesleyan minister at Wingate, Co. Durham. We can congratulate the Rev. gentleman on his courage, and sympathize with him in the case he had to defend. By an arrangement with the Executive of the N.S.S., Mr. Brighton is able to carry on some telling work in various parts of Durham.

Some Freethinkers have peculiar tastes, as for instance those in Finsbury Park, who regularly provide opposition platforms with an audience by taking part in a slamming match between the speaker and the crowd. There is an N.S.S. platform and speaker in Finsbury Park every Sunday morning, and there ought to be a strong Branch of the Society in that quarter, but there is no sense in Freethinkers acting as some appear to have acted.

Mr. G. Whitehead is always assured of a good reception in Bolton and district. He reports good meetings, at which sympathizers predominate. The case for Free-thought was strengthened by opposition from a local vicar, and an officer of the Church Army. Where such good meetings can be held it seems a pity more sustained work cannot be undertaken. Opportunity is very necessary to reveal any local speaking talent which might be well worth using. Starting from to-day (Sunday) Mr. G. Whitehead begins a fortnight's work in the Bradford district. There is a good branch of the N.S.S. in Bradford which will co-operate, and we are sure that everything likely to assure a successful visit will receive thorough attention.

In London regular open-air meetings are being held in every district where a Branch of the N.S.S. exists. There is plenty of room in London for more branches and more meetings. Will the saints in those districts not represented, please take the hint, and get to work.

R. H. ROSETTI,
General Secretary.

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SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

LONDON.

OUTDOOR.

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

FULHAM AND CHELSEA BRANCH N.S.S. (corner of Shorroll Road, North End Road, Walham Green): Wednesday, 7.30, Messrs. Shaller and Haskett. Saturday, 7.30, Messrs. Day and Bryant. *Freethinker* on sale at both meetings.

FINSBURY PARK N.S.S.—11.15, Mr. L. Ebury—A Lecture.

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

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

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. Stonhouse Street, Clapham Road, 7.30—A Lecture. 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. B. A. Le Maine—A Lecture.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 12.0, Mr. B. A. Le Maine; 3.30, Messrs. C. F. 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. F. 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, July 1, at 7.45, Mr. W. Phallin—"The Need for a New Logic."

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

COUNTRY.

OUTDOOR.

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

ACCRINGTON MARKET.—Sunday, June 28, at 7.0, Mr. J. Clayton.

BRIGHTON BRANCH N.S.S.—Every Saturday evening at 7.30 p.m., opposite the Open Market. Every Sunday, at 3.0, The Level.

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY.—Ramble. Meet Dundas Street, train Queen Street to Milngavie, 11.50 a.m.

HARLE SYKE (Car Terminus), Friday, June 26, at 7.30, Mr. J. Clayton.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.—Wednesday, July 1, at 8.0, Bigg Market, Mr. J. T. Brighton—A Lecture.

SUNDERLAND.—Sunday, June 28, at 7.30, near Police-makers Hall, Mr. J. T. Brighton—A Lecture.

WHEATLEY LANE.—Tuesday, June 30, at 7.30, Mr. J. Clayton.

WINGATE.—Saturday, June 27, at 7.0, a Debate between Rev. W. H. Dixon of the Wesleyan Church and Mr. J. T. Brighton, N.S.S.

INDOOR.

BIRKENHEAD BRANCH N.S.S.—An Inaugural Meeting of the new Birkenhead Branch of the N.S.S. will be held on Sunday, July 12, at 8.0, at Beechoft Settlement, Whetstone Lane, Birkenhead. All local Freethinkers (attached or not attached) invited, and are also requested to make the meeting well known among their friends. Any information from Ronald H. S. Standfast, 24 Circular Road, Birkenhead.

PERTH BRANCH N.S.S.—I.L.P. Hall, Sunday evening, 7.30, Debate—"Has Religion Assisted Social Progress?" *Affir.*: Mr. Alec Sinclair; *Neg.*: Mr. Jas. Wingate. Questions and discussion. Members meet at 6.0.

TO GLASGOW FREETHINKERS.—Freethinkers in Glasgow and District are invited to call at the Freethought bookstall at the juncture of West Regent Street and Forthfield Street. A varied assortment of Freethought books always in stock. Current issue of the *Freethinker* on sale. Any book got to order.

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