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Acid Drops, To Correspondents, Sugar Plums,

Letters to the Editor, etc.

Views and Opinions.

Pity the Parsons.

FIVE articles appeared recently in the *Daily Mail* dealing with "Religion's fight to-day." They were written by the Archbishop of York (Church of England), Archbishop Downey (Roman Catholic), Dr. Israel Mattock (Jewish), Principal Griffith Jones (Free Church), and Rev. J. H. Miller (Moderator of the Scottish National Church). It is only charitable to assume that every one of these could have set forth a better case, it is hard to believe that all can be so stupid as not to be able to do better than they have done. Possibly they have some "reserved" meaning in their articles, probably they remembered they were writing for a daily newspaper and thought that anything was good enough so long as the old stupidities and slanders of opposing opinion were repeated. Perhaps the editor assured them that no one should be allowed genuinely to attack them no matter what they said, that the newspaper should offer the same sanctuary as the pulpit and common-sense be sternly denied an entrance. At any rate, there are the articles, and if they are truly representative of the mentality of the religious leaders of to-day, then it becomes just possible that the articles form an Atheistic endeavour to hold up to public contempt the type of man who to-day becomes "a leader in Israel." Perhaps Moscow is getting control of the *Daily Mail*. Perhaps these men would disown any responsibility for being where they are on the ground that God "called" them to their work. On that I cannot express an opinion; only the acceptance of the statement involves such a slander on the judgment of God that I could not accept that explanation without the strongest proof.

* * *

The Marriage of Slander with Stupidity.
Let me commence, as a basis of agreement, with about the only truth enunciated in the articles. Says

the Archbishop of York, "The enemy in our time is Secularism." Rabbi Mattock warns everybody that they should realize "there exists a militant Atheism which seeks earnestly to destroy all religion." Principal Griffith Jones tells us more elaborately that "The Christian ethic is treated as irrelevant to the conditions of conduct in the modern world; Jesus as a brilliant and estimable super-man with no message for us; the Church as a survival of an institution once possibly useful, but now effete and redundant." Dr. Miller asserts that "To-day the civilized world seems to be caught in a racing tide of Secularism." Except for some qualifications that might be introduced with regard to Principal Griffith Jones, we may agree with these statements as expressing the situation, only commenting that this is quite a pretty, and agreed, picture of the "conquering cross" and the "indestructible gospel." And these statements really exhaust the decently intelligent portion of the articles.

That is, if we take them at their face value, and assume an honest meaning of the words used! But there's the rub! What do they mean by this rising tide of Secularism, this wave of Materialism? By Secularism those who have used the term meant that a right ordering of human life may be found in considerations that refer to this life alone and are derived from human nature. By Materialism they meant the belief in the possibility of explaining all natural phenomena in terms of the operations of natural forces. But to have used these terms in these senses would give the game away to-day, since they are the accepted basis of science and of every scientific sociology. So Rabbi Mattock, whose portrait makes him look like a film detective just penetrating through the villain's disguise, discloses the discovery that the militant Atheism against which he wars "denies the worth of man," it is "an attempt against the highest moral values," and calls on the Church and the Synagogue to join in fighting the evil. That is splendidly Catholic—any kind of a God will serve so long as it is a God. They must hang together or they will hang separately. Principal Jones, not quite so eager to embrace any religion says that:—

To the Churches the oracles of God have been entrusted; from them weekly flows the highest teaching the world has ever heard about the true way of life for man and for nations, in and through the Churches are the ideals of conduct, the stuff of character, the inspiration of fine and lofty character, being preached and matured.

No joining with the Synagogue for him! "Secularism," says Dr. Miller, "is essentially a doctrine of despair. It laughs at sin and disposes of morals with a shrug of the shoulders." The Archbishop of York, more cautiously finds the evil of Secularism to be that it believes good can conquer evil without God. Which being interpreted means that it leaves him out of the picture.

All this is deliciously absurd, and can only serve to

remind one that Christianity is returning to type—it is getting back to a form that one had imagined even Christians had outgrown—at least such Christian leaders as make an appeal to the general public. We are back with the gutter branch of the Christian Evidence Society of fifty years ago. There is no morality without religion, Atheism denies the worth of human nature, you cannot have morality without God. And all this after the doctrine of evolution has been discussed for a couple of generations! Is it to be wondered that intelligent men and women leave the Churches, and the Synagogue behind them. Rabbi Mattock belongs, I believe, to the reformed Jews. What must the unreformed ones be like?

* * *

Mere Blather.

Take away this cheap and antique bogey of Secularism destroying marriage, and morality, and the worth of life, etc., and there is simply nothing but wind left in the whole of the articles. There is nothing to answer because nothing is said that deserves reply. The Archbishop of York and the Roman Catholic Dr. Downey, both assert that the only thing that can lead to happiness and social stability is the Church, only they do not agree as to which is *the* Church. Dr. Downey says that man must have authority to rule him, and informs us that his Church alone can supply what is required. That begins and ends his contribution to the symposium. Rabbi Mattock begins and ends with his childish and ignorant bugbear of the dangers of Materialism. Principal Griffith Jones gives us just over a column of windy meanderings about the glorious influence of the Christian Church, and his meaning is about as easy to grasp as a fog. Dr. Miller plays the dual game of the danger of Secularism and the need for the Churches to hang together—and that is absolutely all that this symposium of British religious leaders have to say on "Religion's fight to-day." The intellectual vacuity of it is appalling—more, it is almost unbelievable. Little as I think of the clerical intelligence of to-day, I cannot believe that it is unable to rise above the level of these articles. The still more dreadful reflection is that it is such men as these who are given places of privilege, and with whom our Cabinet Ministers confer and bargain on such vital questions as Education and the right use of a day of rest. I am driven to the conclusion that the exhibition of these men as leaders of religious thought is part of a Bolshevik plot to destroy Christianity.

* * *

A Hopeless Creed.

Christianity, says the Archbishop of York, has usually been fighting for its life, and in that respect the present does not differ greatly from the past. I agree, and would even carry it back further than Christianity. Religion, once we leave the lowest levels of human society, religion is always fighting for its life—its complete life. Other things, art, science, literature, gradually develop and *command* a more complete life. No one can say that either of these things are now, or ever were—with the probable exception of, again, the lowest levels of human society—fighting for their life. What is the cause of this distinction? It is the claim of religion that it answers man's deepest and most imperative needs. Why is it that, with the qualifications named, it has always been fighting to exist? That is not true of any other fundamental quality of man. We do not find the maternal instinct, or the tribal instinct, to take two examples, fighting for their existence. We find them always in being, always insistent, and the change that takes place is a development to a higher and yet higher level. But that is not the case with religion. That

grows weaker as man grows stronger, it plays a smaller part in life as man gets to know more about himself and more about the world in which he is living.

The difference in the two cases is easily discoverable. Art, science, literature, whatever be the forms assumed by them, spring directly from the life of the people among whom they are cultivated. Social and intellectual developments induce different forms of expression, but they do not threaten their existence. Changes in social life may also determine the forms in which the tribal or family feelings express themselves, but their existence is never threatened. But religion only answers to the life around it while that life is in its lowest form. Then it expresses the forms which fear and ignorance gives to man's interpretation of the world in which he lives. Above that stage religion in an increasing measure corresponds to a phase of life, intellectual and social, which man is leaving behind him. Religion is henceforth fighting for its life, because it is at issue with the better aspects of the life around it. It fights for existence because it is only one aspect of the eternal struggle between man as he was and man as he is, and as he might be. It is an aspect of the struggle between science and superstition; and in that fight the champions of superstition represent in an increasing measure types of mind which the more advanced thinkers are leaving behind them. That is the explanation of the fact announced by the Archbishop of York. Religion is fighting for its life—so does barbarism everywhere struggle to exist in the face of advancing civilization.

CHAPMAN COLEMAN.

The Missionary Muddle.

"Hitch your wagon to a star."—Emerson.

"To bear all naked truths,
And to envisage circumstance, all calm;
That is the top of sovereignty."—Keats.

"Christianity has never lost the instinct of universal dominion."—Bible Society Report.

It used to be alleged against John Bull that he had little or no tact in dealing with other races. He trampled on the things he did not understand. Even in neighbouring Ireland he called the Roman Catholic religion "a heathenish superstition," and behaved accordingly. In the East, he epitomized his sentiments concerning the numerous Oriental faiths by regarding all Aryans as "niggers." Of late years John has altered his attitude, and tried to make amends. After Kitchener had smashed the power of the Mahdi, he lent his powerful aid in establishing a Mohammedan University at Khartoum, which was staffed by Moslems.

A certain liveliness is now being shown in religious circles concerning the reinstatement in the "Lord's Vineyard" of German missionaries. The yellow journalists were dead against the proposition, and suggested, amiably, and, perhaps, truthfully that Teutonic missionaries were often actuated by other motives than purely theological ones. According to these oracles, who a short time since regarded all Germans as blank Atheists, every Teutonic missionary is a tradesman in disguise. These be brave and patriotic words, and they raise a far more important question: "Are missions doing the good they are credited with?"

India, for example, is a corner of the Lord's Vineyard which yields little crop, but consumes an amount of labour which might far more profitably be expended elsewhere. There are circumstances which take that great country out of the category of ordin-

ary mission fields. It is only from the John Bullish point of view that the Hindoos can be called barbarians. They have a civilization which was old while as yet our forefathers were painted savages offering human sacrifice at Stonehenge. They have native religions of their own, and, rightly or wrongly, they have an antipathy from foreign ideas. It is we who, in their eyes, are the barbarians, and, truth to tell, what with the quarrels and animosities of the numerous Christian sects who seek to make converts, and the divergence that so obviously exists between the Christian beatitudes and Christian bayonets, the spectacle offered by European civilization cannot be a very edifying one.

Left to herself India would have none of us nor of the Christian priests nor the Christian Bible. We happen, however, to be the stronger Power, so we secure a measure of toleration for missionaries which all classes of Hindoos view with undisguised contempt. Perhaps we could better understand their attitude if the positions were reversed. That is to say, if the Hindoos were able by naval and military force to extort terms for their dark-skinned missionaries to preach Buddhism, Brahminism, and Mohammedanism among ourselves. We ought, really, to look at these things from a fresh point of view. It is not pleasant to think what fate might befall Indian missionaries with their unfamiliar rites and doctrines if they were imposed by bayonets and batons upon the sturdy population of our industrial towns, or upon the Roman Catholics of Liverpool, or even Bermondsey.

In some parts of the world the missionary is a civilizing agency, that is to say, he introduces the social habits of the Western world. That character he does not possess in China. He has nothing but the Christian religion to offer the people in a dozen contradictory versions. Not only do they conflict with each other, but they all run counter to the most cherished and ingrained ideas of Chinese society. To the Chinaman the highest of all virtues is filial piety, and in his eyes some of the most familiar texts of the Christian Bible must appear shocking and immortal. What it costs to convert a Chinaman in blood and treasure we do not know, but it is very certain that missionary societies expend upon a hopelessly barren soil like China an amount of energy and money which might be used to far better purpose in remedying social shortcomings at home among people, who, destitute of the morality of Confucius, stand in as much need of reclamation as the almond-eyed race whom we pretend to pity, and whom we actually do patronize.

It has been calculated that the mission-harvest, on the most favourable computation, amounted to the modest figures of two Chinese per missionary per year, and that, even so, the quality and reputation of the converts were open to distressing suspicion. The renegade Chinese has a confirmed habit of turning his spiritual studies to material account, and is even said to frequent many mission stations, and even to succeed in being converted in turn by all the missionaries, Church-of-England, Roman Catholic, Wesleyan, Presbyterian, and other varieties, in return for being provided with a dole of money and rice. The unhappy sequel to this rule of conduct is that one wily scoundrel figures as half a dozen converts to Christianity, and a bad Chinaman is transformed into a worse Christian. This phenomenon is not unknown in other countries, and in Australia the "Bush Baptist" is a duplicate of the "Rice-Christian" of the Orient.

In Christian circles Jews are often looked upon with hardly less benevolent regard than are Chinese and Hindoos. The missionary question with Jews, that is to say, missions to them, has never been even

a comedy. It has been the most rollicking of farces, compared with which "Charley's Aunt" is a tragedy. Although enormous sums of money are spent yearly, it is not a danger to Judaism, and is never likely to be. There may be Jews who have become Christians from wholly conscientious motives, but few people have met such persons. Some of these converts become missionaries in turn. It is an easier method of earning money than the tailor's pressing iron, if not so honest a one.

When the body of the Jew was taken and burnt alive in order to save his soul, those who perpetrated the cruelty were, at least, straightforward in their fanaticism. They acted as other savages had acted to them, and as, we fear, many religious folk would act to-day to those who differ from them in ideas. In the light of history it is strange that any Jew should change his own religion for Christianity. Jewish theology is simple in comparison with Christian theology. One god is more credible, or less incredible, than a divine Trinity with a Devil and Virgin Mother of God. Further, Christians have persecuted Jews for many centuries. They have shed their blood like rivers, and heaped upon them every insult, from the ravishment of their women to the forcing on them an ignominious dress, and penning them in loathsome Ghettos. Every Jew has a perfect right to dislike the religion of Christ. To their honour the Jews do not dissemble their love. There is a society in England for the conversion of Jews to Christianity. It has an income of about fifty thousand pounds a year, and the number of its converts appears to be so small that every one of them, on the average, costs the society half a year's income.

The whole question of missionary enterprise requires urgent reconsideration. The matter cannot be evaded much longer by men who may profess and call themselves Christian, who may even be ordained to the Christian ministry, but who most certainly have never themselves been converted to civilization. For human progress is not to be measured by the popularizing of bowler hats or tin watches, but by the fulfilment of idealistic achievement.

MIMNERMUS.

God's Drama.

"Our trail is on the Kimmeridge clay,
And the scarp of the Purbeck flags,
We have left our bones in the Bagshot stones,
And deep in the Coraline crags."

LANGDON SMITH. *Evolution.*

"Who trusted God was love indeed
And love Creation's final law—
Tho' Nature, red in tooth and claw
With ravine, shriek'd against his creed."

"Dragons of the prime,
That tare each other in their slime."

TENNYSON. *In Memoriam.*

WE all know with what cries of anger and dismay the pious Victorians received the Darwinian theory of Evolution; just as their predecessors had received the new cosmogony of Copernicus and Galileo. But when it became apparent that the new theory would prevail, the wiser heads among the religious party, turned round and declared that religion had nothing to fear from the theory, and that Evolution was the method employed by God, and not Creation, as our grandmothers believed.

Most of the clergy who adopted this standpoint, tried, unsuccessfully, to wangle the Bible into conformity with this view. A few even went so far as to throw Moses and the Pentateuch overboard alto-

gether, to lighten the ship. Then, after the legion of books produced by the Bible reconcilers had been consigned to the twopenny box; their place was taken by the reconcilers of belief in Evolution, with belief in a God. Not the old Jehovah, of course, or indeed, of any that have been hitherto worshipped, these were all dismissed as baseless fabrics of the imagination. In fact it was a case of "every man his own God maker." Which, if you do not feel strong enough, or self-reliant enough, to do without a God, is the most satisfactory way, as you can then fashion him to your own liking just as the heathen do their idols.

According to the new reconcilers of Evolution and Religion, Evolution was the unfolding of a beautiful panorama. The primitive nebula condensed into stars and planets, and when our planet had sufficiently cooled down, God breathed upon it the breath of life—he must be given something to do, and where man's knowledge ends God's work begins—which started the evolution of plants and animals which continues to this day.

Although the reconcilers classed man along with the animals, yet they made one reservation. The natural forces, they said, were quite adequate to produce man's body, but not his intellectual faculties, here the services of God were again requisitioned, and we were told these faculties, or the mind, spirit, or soul—there were endless disputations over these terms, some believe in a mind and a soul, some even believe in a trinity of mind, soul, and spirit, but the mind is not much in evidence in these cases, and the soul does not seem worth saving, or half the fuss made about it—would survive the dissolution of the body and continue to exist as an immaterial entity. Although of what use an immaterial existence could be, or in what its attraction consists, we have never been able to understand. Even to exist in the form of a gas would be no satisfaction to us, and even the most tenuous gas is material, it is composed of particles of matter. We cannot conceive of immaterial existence, or by what means we should be able to perceive one another under such conditions. Books were written by tame pseudo-scientists, after the style of *Through Nature to God*, in which the story of evolution is shown through rose-tinted glasses, as the working of a divine drama, in which all ends happily in the last act, to the accompaniment of eternal halleluiahs.

A very effective antidote to these trashy books will be found in the work of Prof. J. Hodgdon Bradley, entitled *Parade of the Living* (Routledge, 10s. 6d.), the sub-title of which reads "A History of Life on Earth." Prof. Bradley begins with our cooling planet, upon which life appeared, under the influence of natural causes, physical and chemical. He traces its progress, from lowliest origins, through the geological ages, through an infinite variety of changes, always adjusting itself to its ever changing environment, and when it was unable to make the necessary adjustment, being ruthlessly crushed out. Of living things, our author observes: "Cruel forces beat upon them and reduced them whenever possible to the unleavened clay from which they sprang," and "it is only the romantic who think of life as an unfathomable mystery. The mystic, who believes life an unknown and unknowable force that transcends the nature of matter and energy as manifested in the material world, is not so much concerned with truth as with his own hopes and fancies. We know life not as a principle but as a process."¹

Prof. Bradley does not attempt to gloss over, or ignore the terrible productions of nature. Of the Dinosaurs which "arose to fill the Mesozoic earth

nearly as completely as mammals fill the earth to-day," he says: "These reptiles ranged from the size of a chicken to hulks more than eighty feet long and weighing more than thirty tons. Some combined the weight of an elephant with the blood lust of a weasel, and truly deserved the name of dinosaur, 'the terrible lizard.'" (p. 101.) During the Jurassic period "the reptilian hordes swarmed in profusion and variety. . . The carvororous dinosaurs grew into forms so terrible in their obvious potentialities that they stand to-day as the best expression of nature in her ugliest mood." Of these, *Allosaurus* measured thirty-four feet long and eight feet high. "His roomy mouth with its battery of saw-edged teeth effectively served his appetite. The claws and talons of a gigantic eagle armed both hands and feet. He ranged widely over the Mesozoic marshlands, demonstrating to the weak the reality of death." (p. 103.) But it was during the Upper Cretaceous period that nature produced the most terrible engine of destruction, slaughter incarnate. Says Prof. Bradley:—

Tyrannosaurus came forth, the supreme climax of a sanguary race. He was death in a living body, the largest and most horrible beast of prey the earth has ever seen. Forty-seven feet of powerful flesh had been built into a body heavier than that of even the largest elephant. Standing on massive hind limbs that supported his entire weight, he towered twenty feet above the ground. His head was more than four feet long, three feet deep, and nearly three feet wide. His jaws were set with daggers three to six inches long, and on his toes were claws as long as a man's hand. (p. 105.)

These reptiles had a good long innings, longer than we are likely to have, we are told: "For more than one hundred million years, muscle was the measure of success, and by that measure *Tyrannosaurus* was easily king."

Why, the divinity, which is supposed to shape our ends, evolved these atrocities and allowed them to flourish for a hundred million years is a problem that it will take all the ingenuity of the theologians to answer. Later on, during the Miocene and Pliocene epochs, the terrible sabre-toothed tigers appeared upon the scene. "Instead of biting their prey they held it between vice-like front limbs, stabbing with the daggers in the upper jaw until loss of blood brought death." Of these nightmare beasts we are told:—

Judging from their increase in size and number, they found murder an agreeable and profitable business. *Smilodon*, who terrorized North and South America during the ice age, marked the culmination of a merciless race. His body was one of the deadliest engines of destruction the devil ever invented. The tusks in his upper jaw were ten inches long. His lower jaw dropped straight down so that he could drive the daggers to their hilts into the necks of his victims. (p. 184.)

It is often said that disease is the result of civilization, due to living under unnatural conditions, and that there are no diseases in wild life. This is quite untrue. Says our author: "Moodie, to whom we owe most of our knowledge of Mesozoic diseases, lists fifteen distinct ailments which harassed the reptilian hordes of that day. Tuberculosis, necroses, lists of hyperstoses were there. Even rheumatism and pyorrhœa! No one can know the ills that dwelt in the soft parts of extinct animals. Decay has prevented any recording. But it is safe to assume that they were at least as common as the bone diseases." (pp. 210-211.)

If there is any intelligence at work behind evolution it is evidently, as Herbert Spencer remarked, diabolical.

W. MANN

¹ J. H. Bradley. *Parade of the Living*. pp. 12-13.

Swedenborg.

I.

CAREFUL investigation has led to the conclusion that there is a more rational explanation than might be supposed for the undoubted fact that among a large number of minor Christian sects in this country, and in the United States of America, The New (Swedenborgian) Church, counts among its adherents, and occasional converts, a very large proportion of people of more than ordinary intelligence. The explanation is, we shall endeavour to prove, as follows. In this Protestant country, much more than in the more Protestant of the United States, there are an increasing number of people who grow sceptical of the evangelical gospel. The verbal inspiration of the Bible; the doctrine of the Trinity, the widely known results of knowledge fatal to the historicity of the Old Testament, and to the reputed authorships of both Old and New; the obvious contradictions of supposedly divinely revealed pronouncements; these, and many other such developments must end, in piously disposed but intelligent minds, to the fundamental issue of authority in religion.

Intelligence or unconscious bias prevents these persons from reaching that final alternative postulated by Cardinal Newman, Rome or Reason. They desire, if possible, without sacrificing reason, to preserve faith. They desire to find a rational basis for accepting at once the results of modern scholarship and science, and the inspiration of the Bible in a sense other than its literal accuracy. The more logical, critical, and less emotional person comes directly to the issue of the Bible or the Church as the final deposit and living voice of revelation. But the average English mentality, reflected in every really national institution, religious or secular, tends to compromise. It will be shown as we proceed how, in these conditions, Swedenborgianism becomes an attractive *via media* to those who are too intelligent to believe in the moral doctrine of salvation by faith alone; or in the supernatural as a whole, and upon authority; but who still want some escape from agnosticism or unbelief.

Now although the supposed revelation of Swedenborg has all the impossible features of the Bible, and none of its literary charm (at least in the Authorized Version), Swedenborg himself stands out a figure that commands attention independent of his personal or theological claims in relation to the later portion of his prodigious output of works which, in so far as they were concerned with the natural sciences, were largely in advance of his age. This fact is, of course, the first to be brought to the notice of an "honest doubter" by a Swedenborgian believer. For, if he can establish an *a priori* conviction of Swedenborg's fine character, undoubted integrity and exceptional learning, he will have an advantage denied to the advocates of such imposters as the late Dr. Dowie, Brigham Young or Smyth Piggott. In order to bring home the force of this advantage in dealing with the type of persons before mentioned, we will preface the consideration of his theology by a brief sketch of Emanuel Swedenborg's life and work, and, in order to make the intention of this paper clear, it shall err, if at all, on the side of partiality.

II.

If Emanuel Swedenborg had founded a new religion he would certainly have stood alone and distinct in that class, but, contrary to the common impression, he does not come into that category, for he did not found a new religion, much less a new sect. Not that it would be unique to find a scientist a

member of an obscure denomination. Faraday was a Sandamanian or Glassite. Swedenborg's father was a Swedish Bishop, who was born in the year Oliver Cromwell became Protector, 1653. His name was Jasped Swedberg, and he died in 1735, when his son Emanuel, born in 1688, was forty-seven. The family was ennobled by Charles XI. of Sweden, and took the name Swedenborg.

Of Emanuel Swedenborg's youth it may be said, reversing the well known reference to a certain English bishop, that he was a man of much piety and some learning. According to his own account his parents were orthodox Christians, his piety was of a somewhat precocious order, and by the time he was ten years of age he "revealed things at which my father and mother wondered, saying that angels must be speaking through me." He cultivated the acquaintance of clergymen, and the study of mathematics and natural history. He came to London in 1710, and again eleven years later, and travelled a good deal in Europe.

He was of an inventive turn of mind, and in 1714 he had fourteen inventions to his credit, which seem to have included something like a submarine, a new musical instrument, an air gun, a plan for constructing sluices "where there is no fall of water," and a syphon. It is recorded that at the siege of Frederickshall, in 1718, he devised a contrivance which "transported two galleys, five large boats, and one sloop, over mountains and valleys for a distance of fourteen miles." His special attention to mining began in 1721, and three years after he became Assessor in the Royal College of Mines, and, having a seat in the Upper Chamber of the Swedish Parliament, was a useful and independent member of that assembly.

Still, and until his death, which took place in London on March 29, 1772, aged eighty-six, Swedenborg was a Christian. His theological works (which began publication, like all other of his works at his own expense, and the profits from which he ordered to be spent on the "propagation of the gospel"), starting in 1750, may be said to have given a new meaning to the current theology of evangelical Protestantism. But he never appears to have contemplated the establishment of a separate body, like the New Church, or the Swedenborgian Church, or the New Jerusalem Church, as it is variously called. There were clergymen among what were called the "receivers" of his doctrines, but they remained in their livings, and did not think, apparently, that these teachings were inconsistent with that course.

The early followers of Swedenborg were, a little pathetically, called "isolated receivers," a term which is believed to survive in the churches associated with the General Conference of the New Church as describing members who live far from one of its own places of worship, but are in membership. In fact the "isolated receiver" in Swedenborgianism is like the "individual member" in the Labour Party who, in so many cases, seems to be in it but not of it. There can be no doubt that Swedenborg thought and believed that his teachings would reform the existing Protestant christendom from within.

Unlike many other mystics, and persons who have given their names to sects, Swedenborg was no charlatan. He was a man of fine character, unusual intellect, and entire integrity. There is no better evidence of this than that on April 7, 1909, one hundred and more years after his death, Swedenborg's remains were removed from London to his native country at the instance of the Government of Sweden, and laid to rest in Upsala Cathedral, where his saccophagus was unveiled by H.M. Gustav V., King of Sweden, in 1910. Also in that year there was an International Swedenborg Congress in London, at-

tended by delegates to the number of 400, representing learning and Swedenborgian piety in practically every civilized country in the world.

III.

The credibility of Swedenborg's theology depends, in the last analysis not on the differences between his character and attainments and those of other claimants of divine revelation, but on that claim itself. This is admitted by the standard apologist of the denomination in his *magnum opus*,* who entitles his chapter dealing with the matter. "A Human Instrument necessary, and therefore raised up." Swedenborg himself clearly states his claim. "I have been called to a holy office by the Lord himself, who most graciously manifested himself in person to me, his servant, in the year 1743; when he opened my sight to the view of the spiritual world, and granted me the privilege of conversing with spirits and angels, which I enjoy to this day." (*i.e.*, 1769). He also declared in 1758 that what in orthodox theology, and in the Bible, is called The Last Judgment had then been accomplished, not in the natural, but in the "spiritual" world. Also that the second coming of Christ was a "spiritual" event, that he was its proclaimer, and that, as a result "we are actually living in the age of the second coming of the Lord," and "a new dispensation of divine truth, adapted to the present state and needs of the human mind, has been communicated from a divine source."

We will describe, in our own words, for the sake of brevity, the differences in doctrine between the "new church" and the old. They effect doctrines common both to Protestant and Catholic theology. (1) Not three persons in one God, but God, one person, and that person Jesus Christ. The father: the divine essence; the son: the divine form; the Holy spirit: the divine influence. (2) The resurrection of the dead is not a resurrection of the body. At death identity, spiritual, "substantial," but not material, is retained. One who dies of drink will enter the spirit world with that appetite unchanged, but in the spirit world there is both improvement and backsliding; and "substantial," but not material, houses, trees, etc. There "does not exist in all the heavens a single angel, nor in all hell a single infernal (devil) nor in any region of creation a single spiritual being who did not first come into existence as a man." Heaven and Hell, and an intermediate "world of spirits," are states not places, but not merely states of mind, but "substantial" territories. (3) The second coming of Christ and the last judgment (see above). (4) Salvation is not by faith alone. "All religion has relation to life, and the life of religion is to do good"; and "no one is reformed in states that are not those of rationality and liberty." (5) Holy Scripture (the Bible) is inspired not as to its literal sense, or as history or poetry or science, but in an internal or interior spiritual sense, not mere analogy, but according to a scientific correspondence between the literal figure and its spiritual meaning, which explains the mysteries and apparent contradictions of the natural sense of the words.

ALAN HANDSACRE.

(To be concluded.)

God forbid that such a scoundrel as want should dare approach me!—Swift.

* "An Appeal on behalf of the views of the eternal world and state and the doctrines of faith and life held by the body of Christians who believe that a new church is symbolized (revelation chap. xxi.) by the New Jerusalem embracing answers to all principal objections." By Rev. Samuel Noble. (Quotations here from 11th Edition, 1886).

The Pirates of Penzance.

WHEN Sir Arthur Sullivan's Golden Legend was first produced musical critics hailed it as a great work, and were thankful that the composer had deserted light opera for something more solemn.

Nowadays no one thinks the Golden Legend anything but dull drawing room music.

In the same way Sullivan's Ivanhoe written at the request of Queen Victoria, was intended by the composer to be his masterpiece, yet although there are one or two fine fragments in it, Dr. Walker declares that as an opera it is filled with a deadly dullness which passes belief.

Yet Sullivan is world famous, and his light operas draw crowds wherever and whenever they are performed.

The reason is obviously that the Puritan element in England which would attempt to extol the solemn and the heavy at the expense of the gay and jolly has shot its bolt, and the smugness of Victorian days has had to give way to the new freedom.

I am led to these reflections after listening to six gramophone records which record the lyrics and songs from the light opera "The Pirates of Penzance." These records are H.M.V. B. 3846-51, and cost only 18s. or 21s. in album.

The Pirates of Penzance are not historic characters, indeed they are little more than buffoons, as are the police men in the opera.

The singers are George Baker, Darrell Fancourt, Stuart Robertson, Derek Oldham, Sydney Grauville, Muriel Dickson and Bertha Lewis, whose tragic fate is still fresh in our minds.

But my particular reason for writing about these records is to bring before readers some of the good things contained in the libretto written, of course, by W. S. Gilbert.

Gilbert should be popular with readers for he hated ostentation, and there is a story told of his being with a group of poseurs who were praising Shakespeare. Gilbert expressed the opinion that Shakespeare was a very obscure poet, and advanced as proof the passage, "I would as lief be thrust through a quick set hedge as cry splash to a callow throistle?"

One enthusiast cried "Beautiful. So clear. Here is a humane man who would prefer to suffer agonies rather than cause any alarm to a singing bird. Quite clear. What play is it in?"

"No play," replied Gilbert, "I've just invented it!" As one might expect the words of any opera he wrote ought to contain something equally scathing and sarcastic, and "The Pirates of Penzance" is no exception.

On the very first record one comes upon a sentiment expressed by the pirate king, which one wonders passed the censor in 1880.

The pirate king sings:—

"I sink a few more ships it's true
Than a well bred monarch ought to do!
But many a king on a first-class throne
If he wants to call his throne his own
Must manage somehow to get through
More dirty work than ever I do."

Again the same kind of mocking at the English appears on the last record:—

"They are all noblemen who have gone wrong
No Englishman unmoved that statement hears
Because with all our faults we love our House of Peers."

This coupled with his "Iolanthe" song:—

"When Wellington thrashed Bonaparte,
As every child can tell
The House of Peers throughout the war
Did nothing in particular
And did it very well."

shows that Gilbert had no respect for the nobility.

The Pirates of Penzance is not all sarcasm; there is some good fun in it and some charming tunes, and the listener will realize that the whole is a kind of skit on conventional grand opera. Particularly is this evident in Mabel's song "Poor wandering one," which forms a travesty of coloratura singing, and which is nevertheless equal to any of the songs it parodies.

Lastly there is something to appeal to readers in the fact that Grossmith objected to go into Gilbert and Sullivan opera for fear the Y.M.C.A. would cut him off their list of entertainers!

BAY.

Acid Drops.

A woman in Paris is seeking divorce because her husband still maintains intercourse with his first wife through spirit mediums. We knew something like this would happen sooner or later. One can imagine the irritating effect of wife number one informing wife number two of what she used to do to make dear John happy. But what will happen when dear John goes to heaven and finds two spirit wives waiting for him? Will polygamy be tolerated, will number two be cast off, or will the ghosts of departed divorce judges be employed in pronouncing *decree nisis* between these too much-married couples. We do not believe Spiritualists have ever dealt with the problem. Yet it is a pressing question, and we invite them to do so. Our columns are open. To make it easier we offer not to disclose to their earthly wives the name of writers who have already married twice.

A Christian newspaper, *The Watchman-Examiner*, in giving hints on preaching says the great thing is for the clergyman to keep his hands out of his pockets. We should have thought the difficult thing would have been for him to keep his hands out of other people's pockets.

The *Daily Express* announces that a woman in the West Country sent four pounds to the Rev. R. Webb, Odell, with a note, "Please take these; it is all I have." The woman had read in the *Express* that there were two millions of people in the country with no Church to which to go. We are not surprised at a woman who could be so affected, by the *Daily Express*, subscribing all she had to help this two millions of poor people whom the *Express* had led her to believe were wandering about broken-hearted because they had no Church to which to go. Or perhaps she had been affected by the Rev. Gordon Lang, who preferred Oldham to London because that delightful country paradise did not tempt the innocent souls of chapel goers with young lady attendants who actually wore trousers. One can never tell.

The *Church Times* appears to believe that "the task of education is to induce in human beings the power to take control of themselves. We do not agree. The task of education, in this country, or in Russia, or in Italy, or in most other places, appears to be that of inducing a readiness to be controlled by other people. What other aim is there than this in what is called religious education? And what would happen to a teacher in any school who taught his pupils really to take control of themselves? The formula should read, the aim of education is to teach human beings so to control themselves as normally to act as other people desire them to act, and it is the efficient education which leads people to so act as to believe that they are acting in complete independence.

We do not, as our readers know, place an extremely high value on the mentality of the electorate, but are they quite such fools as the Right Hon. J. H. Thomas appears to think they are? At a recent meeting of the National Union of Seamen he is reported as saying:—

I conscientiously believe that it is a divine Providence that has ordained that a Labour Prime Minister should face this problem.

Mr. Thomas ought to know his constituents, but he is running some risk of them finding him out. No body of people like being told to their face that they are fools.

And even a Cabinet Minister ought to keep up the pretence of being moderately intelligent, instead of displaying mere artfulness. Mr. Snowden says the Land question is one of "God versus the Dukes," Mr. Thomas believes that God appointed Ramsay Macdonald, the Attorney-General believes that God must be looked after by the policeman, through the agency of the Blasphemy Laws, and Mr. Gordon Lang prefers Oldham to London because there are no Sunday entertainments there—except those provided by the Church and Chapel. What a gang!

Glancing back at November 11, 1918, a leading article in the *Star* concluded, "In our grateful humility let us clasp hands as brothers, resolved that in the days to be we shall labour together for the sure garnering of the great harvest of liberty and peace in all the sorrow-stricken lands." The *Daily Mail* the "Soldiers" paper, on the high note of journalistic rhetoric has the following: "And to Him who has so ordered events that as men look back this war seems like the culmination of all modern history and the final vindication of justice all will bow the head in praise." From the *Daily Express*, July 18, 1931, we take the following extract of ecstatic guzzling in words to enable the groundlings of humanity to get the air sense:—

Night shrouds London in a summer silence. Suddenly from afar comes the drone of massive bombing airplanes. Searchlights stab the skies. Anti-aircraft guns bark at the hidden menace in the clouds. Lithe fighting machines dart upwards into combat.

This same paper has very obligingly published, with photographs, the names of eight financiers, with the title of "Financial Rulers of the World." Eight is less than eighty or eight millions, and the suggestion of the Freethinker is that if there is to be war, it should be confined to these eight men. Economy is the order of the day, and there will be less of a mess if the area of war is confined to eight rulers of the world. We seriously submit this suggestion to all Peace Associations, to Prime Ministers, and all with enough sense to know that civilization is on the razor edge of survival or destruction.

Sir Robert Perks is perturbed because over 4,000 villages in England have no Nonconformist chapel of any kind. Still, as the Rev. Dr. Workman has found one district in which thirty villages share ninety-one Methodist chapels, "God's in his Heaven, all's right with the world."

Lady Oxford says she never remembers a time "when the Past was not extolled at the expense of the Present." Still, as many of the disparages of the Present have "an axe to grind," there's no difficulty in assessing the true value of their criticism. We know why Messrs. Chesterton and Belloc extol the Middle Ages; and we know why many of the parsons find fault with the Present.

The Rev. Walter Brée told the Wesleyan Conference that France was only nominally Catholic. He did not deny that Roman Catholicism produced saints, but it certainly produced Atheists. For many Atheistic lecturers were ex-priests.

Dr. Dimsdale Young wants the Wesleyan Church to get back to the Puritan position. "Your rotten Modernist doctrines," he says, "are emptying the churches, and I'm glad they do." The Wesleyan parsons, it would seem, are between the devil and the deep sea. If they cling to their ancient narrow doctrines and notions, the younger generation won't stay in the churches. When they introduce the latest white-washed doctrines, the old generation are offended. The situation seems decidedly awkward.

In one of the works of Voltaire a passage may be found that is a good criticism of some events that take place in the present. He wrote: "I am afraid that our little terraqueous globe here is the mad-house of those hundred thousand millions of worlds, of which your lordship does me the honour to speak." The subject was that of astronomy. When the Great War ended, part of the German Fleet was sunk at Scapa Flow. The battle-ships are now being raised, but there is no market for two of them. We suggest that they be sold to Switzerland for the manufacture of alarm clocks capable of waking up the human race to the glories of war.

In this country, says a director of education, there are 300,000 children in backward classes in schools. There are also, we may add, some few thousands of mental deficient in special institutions. But this state of affairs is one of the penalties people suffer for listening to the Church's injunction to "be fruitful and multiply," and breeding for quantity rather than quality. As the result of taking spiritual advice seems rather costly to the nation, the Church might well be asked to contribute something towards the extra expense.

Politics and religion in Ireland combine to make her grotesquely remote from the general trend of thought, opinion, and comment. Thus the *Irish News* (Belfast), which is supposed to represent the Catholic minority in the territory of the Government of Northern Ireland, refers to "newspapers who think nothing is good enough for English Freethinkers and nothing cheap enough for Irish Catholics." Where, in God's name, are these newspapers? This extraordinary statement is in a leading article, and refers to some remarks of the (orthodox and formerly Unionist) *Irish Times*, suggesting that if and when a proposed Eucharistic Congress comes to Dublin next year it is to be hoped that "the dwindling slums of Dublin will have proved that our Christianity is something more than a name." The *Irish News* (which surely ought to be called the *Catholic News*), protests against the suggestion that "Irishmen are to be judged as to whether they are Christian or not by the rapidity of slum clearances." Of course this is far too practical a test of Christianity to suit an organ blessed by the Pope; but it is a blunt revelation of the fact, which the slums of Dublin and Belfast alike enforce, that the Christian religion, whether by the sign of the cross, or by the beating of the Orange drum, is not inconsistent with the defence of the most unspeakable conditions for the majority of its devotees and dupes.

Stands Christianity where it did? Certainly it does—in Tennessee. That enlightened State has a law which forbids the teaching of evolution in schools. A Bill to repeal this law was introduced in the House of Representatives and has just been defeated by fifty-eight votes to fourteen. So Christianity, real Christianity, not the hybrid kind of stuff that is poured out by such men as Bishop Barnes, still rules in Tennessee. When our Lord comes again, we imagine he will feel quite at home in that State—that is if he does not put off his return visit too long. If he delays he may find even that stronghold of the religion that he knew given over to the enemy.

There are a great many Churches at present that are in low water, but two Churches in the Lake district will soon be under water. The Manchester Corporation is raising the dam at Haweswater, and this will involve the submerging of two Churches. In the good old days the Lord would have been busy with earthquakes, or plagues, or some such thing if anything of this kind had been attempted. But in these degenerate days a resolution by a mere Corporation seems to have more effect than a "Thus saith the Lord."

Bishop McConnell has just returned home, to the United States, from India and writing on Missionaries, as against Hindo religious conceptions, he says that

"When it comes to fighting pestilence, the missionary's use of scientific measures of prevention and cure is very much more successful than beating drums to fight away cholera devils." That is all very well, but what will Tennessee and "Our Lord" have to say about it? For, after all, while the New Testament does not actually advise the beating of drums, it does advise that diseases may be cured by prayer. And between beating drums to call God's attention to the desirability of curing certain people of sickness, and praying to God to cure them there is verbal difference only. Our Lord and his disciples would have been on the side of the drum beaters and not with the Missionaries, who ignore his teachings and trust to the Atheistic methods of medical science.

Sir Josiah Stamp says: "You can only pay your debt to the past by putting the future in debt to you." This pronouncement will, we fancy, be greeted with a rather wry face by the new generation. It will wonder how it can possibly provide a debt of gratitude for the future while it is so very busy striving to settle the financial debts incurred by a past generation as the result of that late colossal stupidity known as the Great War.

The Rev. Reginald Glanville says there is now no active opposition on a considerable scale to Methodist Union. He adds that if the whole membership of the three Churches were taken, it would be found that there are more people whose attitude to union is that of indifference than there are either decidedly for or actively against union. We daresay Mr. Glanville is right. Some of the ministers have been saying that the urge towards union was inspired by God. By the look of things, we gather that it is mainly the Methodist parsons who have received the inspiration, and particularly those who are professionally astute. From union they are hoping for "better things"; but the "better things" hoped for are not necessarily connected with the Kingdom of Heaven, but rather with a happier kingdom for parsons.

Professor Gilbert Murray says:—

The killing machine is fading into the background. It will gradually fade out like the Cheshire Cat in Alice in Wonderland, with a grin on its face and perhaps with a few teeth left.

One may add the reminder that the killing machine and the idea of killing will not just fade out of their own accord. They will fade out only as a result of continuous efforts by genuine lovers of peace to educate public opinion and modify public sentiment in the direction of humane and more civilized ideals. One thing is certain. War and the idea of war will never be made to disappear by means of prayers for peace and chanting, "Give peace in our time, O Lord." This method has been tried and found wanting.

Dr. Basil Yeaxlee, D.D., recently referred to *Punch* as "our best religious journal." *Punch* should return the compliment by referring to one of the religious journals—for example, *Methodist Times*—as our best (unconsciously) humorous journal. It deserves the compliment.

Captain Frank Shaw's description of his youthful misery on Sundays, due to strict evangelical training, (see our issue of July 19) has elicited a rejoinder from the Rev. Geo. Armitage, of Elland, Yorks. This parson, it seems, underwent similar pious training at the same Sunday-school and church, but he appears to have enjoyed it! For he says, "My wife and I both agree that those were the happiest days of our life." There's no accounting for taste! Captain Shaw's rebellion against such narrow and stupid training, however, would appear to suggest that his mental constitution in youth was much more wholesome than that of the Rev. Geo. Armitage and his wife.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

FREETHINKER ENDOWMENT TRUST.—C. H. Gronn (Australia), ss.

"GRATEFUL."—We are very pleased to have your appreciation of our efforts. Thanks. We will do as you desire.

W. F. SPENCER.—We would willingly do so, but our space is mortgaged this week, and the holidays, with Mr. Cohen's visit to Durham, prevents him doing as you request in time for the next issue. Why not recur to your original idea? We are sure it will be worthily handled.

J. R. LICHFIELD.—We quite share—with many other readers—your appreciation of Mr. Fraser's articles. We hope to find his name in the *Freethinker* for many years.

G. BURGESS.—Thanks for what you are doing. The refusal to have the *Freethinker* in the public library because there are "295 religious or sectarian periodicals published in England," and that a selection must be made, is too thin. It is unworthy of the usual artfulness of the bigot. The reply is obvious. There is only one *Freethinker*, and no other paper in this country can be said to represent the same point of view.

J. CLARK.—We have handed your letter to our business manager. Will receive attention.

H. MELTON.—Your statement that Bradlaugh "as an Agnostic refused to take the Parliamentary oath" is correct, with the exception that Bradlaugh was not an Agnostic, but an Atheist, and he did not refuse to take the parliamentary oath. He claimed the right to affirm, and offered to take the oath, when he found that he had not the legal right to take it, with the explanation that he would take the oath as a pledge of his word. He was refused the oath. Hence the parliamentary struggle.

H. LIBERTO.—Received. Thanks. Hope to see you again one day.

"Give us more articles like the one on Byron," writes Mr. R. Leanev. We should be pleased to do so, but there are other subjects that demand first attention. A. T. also writes thanking us for the article on Byron, which he says will do something to bring the real Byron before many who do not know him.

W. F. H. REES.—Letter held over until next week. Sorry.

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

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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.

The General Secretary will be on Vacation from August 8 until the 22nd, and during that period matter of pressing importance only will be dealt with at Headquarters.

Mr. G. Whitehead reports excellent meetings in Ashington, Northumberland. Large crowds assembled each evening during the week, and there appears to be good prospects of a Branch of the N.S.S. being formed there shortly. In Northumberland, as elsewhere, there are numbers of Freethinkers who must be aware that our work can and will only be done by Freethinkers combining for that purpose.

On Saturday, August 1, Mr. Whitehead will speak at West Regent Street, Glasgow, at 7.30 p.m., and on Sunday, at Alexandra Park Gates, at 7 p.m. Further announcements will be made at those meetings.

Mr. George Lansbury's very reasonable attitude towards refreshment in the parks has been the cause of much criticism. A correspondent in the *Daily Telegraph* is now asking the London Free Church Federation when they were appointed guardians of the moral welfare of the people? The questioner will remain unanswered, and it would have been economy of words to describe the Federation as a collection of nosey parkers and leave it to prove otherwise. No one would force any member of the Federation to go and have one, in the same way that non-church or chapel goers would not wish to prevent anyone from going to a place of worship. But this point is difficult to grasp by those who imagine the Lord is interested in a glass of beer.

That amiable writer "Beachcomber," in the *Daily Express* is perhaps one of the few last relics of free speech in the press. Very frequently he gives a joyful poke at various forms of imbecility that are allowed to be at large in a very tolerant world. We shall let "Beachcomber" speak for himself:—

During the lull in sermon-preaching records, Dame Aimée, Aimée, Semple, McPharsin, our modern writing on the wall, has been in for a scripture-reading Marathon, at her temple in Los Angeles. Moreover, she made use of the world's largest Bible.

A bullseye seems to be scored in that "our modern writing on the wall."

To the late Lord Salisbury, in making a choice of a new Archbishop of Canterbury, the following observation is attributed: "It seems to me essential that there should be no doubt in the public mind that the Archbishop of Canterbury is an earnest believing Christian." This is a dubious compliment from a statesman.

In reply to Mr. Bayley, our contributor Mr. G. H. Taylor writes:—

A correspondent suggests that I am unaware of the work of Dr. Arthur Lynch. He will find a reference in the *Freethinker*, No 52 (1930) and No. 16 (1931). I had Dr. Lynch himself to thank for kindly drawing my attention to the *Principles*, for it is undeservedly ignored in most bibliographies.

In the dispute between the Archbishop of Canterbury and Dr. Barnes, it will be noticed that however much gravity the disputants bring to bear on the subject, the question does not come within speaking distance of common sense. How much independence of thought is estimated may be gathered from the following extract from the Archbishop's letter to Dr. Barnes:—

I cannot but ask, is it charitable, is it just, to brand as mere superstition a belief, whatever you yourself may think about it, which is held by multitudes of your fellow Churchmen, and which is consistent with the formularies of the Church?

It will be seen that the fact of multitudes holding beliefs is a proof of the truth of such beliefs. And yet there are many who profess astonishment when the Freethinker can point to the relics of the savage in our midst.

Fifty Years of Freethought.

THE second volume* of Mr. George E. Macdonald's fascinating history has just come to hand. The veteran Editor of our famous contemporary, the American *Truth Seeker*, carries on the story from the point where he left off in the first volume in 1891 to 1925, and it is to be hoped he will be able to give us another ten years at least before he retires from active work—if ever he wants to, that is. Do Freethinkers ever retire, I wonder? Most of the great people in our movement died in active harness, the call for truth and justice, for tolerance and freedom, being too strong ever to be resisted. They lived full and splendid lives—and all the more worthy because they never looked for reward on this earth, and they laughed at the idea that they would get anything, good or bad, in another.

From the seventies to his death in 1899, American Freethought was dominated by that splendid humanist, Robert Green Ingersoll. He stands out a giant in its history; and one may well wonder whether his like will ever be seen again. As an orator, as a controversialist, as a prose poet, he towers head and shoulders above the mass of his contemporaries. The man with whom I first worked, who had heard Ingersoll over and over again, told me he would spend the last dollar he had in the world to hear the great Freethinker, and when he died, my friend felt the loss as if Ingersoll had been the dearest of personal friends. Like all great men you either hated him or loved him, but even his enemies were compelled to admire the wonderful oratory, the good humour, the witty epigrams, with which Ingersoll filled his notable lectures. Is it not an extraordinary coincidence that both he and Bradlaugh were born in 1833, both were famous in law—one as a lawyer, the other for his uncanny knowledge of it, both were great orators and controversialists, both were loved and hated and feared, and both have left imperishable names in the social history of our times, rising in greatness every day? Mr. Macdonald gives striking and graphic pictures of the great American at work. I have always thought his last lecture, "What is Religion?" delivered on June 2, in 1899, was perhaps the finest thing he ever did. It is short and serious and packed with brains. Those readers who have their Ingersoll handy should read it again. They will not be sorry.

While the first volume of his *Fifty Years* was mainly autobiographical—and extraordinarily interesting too—in this second volume Mr. Macdonald recalls year by year the work of most of the American Freethinkers of his generation. We get portraits of almost all who lived and worked for the movement.

Here you will learn of E. B. Foote, the famous old doctor, whose *Plain Home Talk* had an enormous circulation both here and in the States, a book which was a pioneer of sex knowledge. Those "bright young people," who imagine the old Victorian duffers were altogether too ignorant of sex and sex implications, and who would have learnt a great deal from them, had they been living now, would, I fancy, open their eyes if they were to read that famous work. You simply can not teach your grandmother to suck eggs. Then both the old man's sons took a prominent part in Freethought and Birth Control in spite of Cornstock and his sex-obsessed mind.

Theodore Schroeder, T. B. Wakeman, Franklin Steiner, C. B. Waite and a host of others come into the pages. So does Ryan Walker, whose war cartoon is reproduced—a cartoon which I never look at with-

out roaring with laughter. It represents with immitable wit, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, done to the life, so to speak. The line underneath is "When the prayers reached the back of and God the Father with a silk hat on the back of his head, smoking a big cigar is pathetically asking "Why mix me up in the row?" God, the Son with a halo and a very short buttoned jacket, looks positively bewildered, and says nothing while God, the Holy Ghost is crying, "For the love of Mike—neutrality!" What Mr. Justice North would have said had he had the artist in front of him on a charge of blasphemy, I really cannot imagine. Possibly he would have fainted with horror on the spot and, on recovery, ordered Ryan Walker to instant execution. There are a number of pen sketches of English Freethinkers—old and new. "As a writer and speaker," says Mr. Macdonald, "Mr. Charles Watts was the most serious of men; in congenial company, the jolliest." Charles Watts and G. W. Foote paid a visit to the States in 1896, and Mr. Macdonald recalls the audience of two thousand, who gathered to hear them in Chicago. Before then they got a splendid reception from the New York Freethinkers, and the speeches of S. P. Putnam, Watts, Foote, Ingersoll and Wakeman were all reproduced in the *Truth Seeker*. Mr. Macdonald's impressions of Foote are worth recording again:—

Mr. G. W. Foote, President of the National Secular Society of Great Britain, has been looking over New York for several days previous to this writing, and New Yorkers have looked over Mr. Foote during that time. He has not told how our "institutions" impress him, but if they stand the scrutiny as well as he does, their permanence is in no danger. The word "imperturbable" describes him fairly. Other Englishmen, I have observed, are at times impatient. They are choleric or jolly as the occasion may dispose. Foote is bland and humorous . . . although oblivious or indifferent to what can't be helped, and while he would not ostentatiously defy meteorology, Mr. Foote is obviously alert and curious. He observes and inquires . . . He is quite candid. His criticism of American ideas are that they are superficial, and he has a right to that opinion for America has no thinker like Spencer, nor any observer like Darwin . . . Personally Mr. Foote is handsomer than he looks—that is than he looks in any of his pictures. He would be taken for a doctor, or at least a professor, for he has the manner of the learned . . . He is a man above nationality, so far as I can judge. On all topics of interest he is radical to the verge of reasonableness, and his thought is trammelled only by obstructive facts. Wherever he may go he will not attract attention as a "stranger in these parts."

I think that is a fine character sketch, but those who knew and remember Foote will be able to judge better than I. Mr. Macdonald adds, "I heard Mr. Foote before the Manhattan Liberal Club on 'The Irreligion of Shakespeare.' Mr. Foote met Ingersoll and pronounced his personality commensurate with his genius." Was it not characteristic of Foote to lecture on Shakespeare—and on Shakespeare's *irreligion*? They were the two great subjects of his life, and they dominated all his career. It was over twenty years later that Joseph McCabe visited America—in 1917, and this is Mr. Macdonald's pen-sketch of that doughty Freethinker and writer:—

Joseph McCabe, the English Rationalist, who had done "twelve years in a monastery," and wrote a book so entitled, was a guest in America in 1917. Then and for some time hereafter I had difficulty in adjusting Mr. McCabe's personality to his huge and heavy literary product . . . Mr. McCabe belongs to the order of Little Giants, being less than middle-sized but mighty . . . He is that combination of

* *Fifty Years of Freethought*. Vol. 2, by George E. Macdonald. New York, 1931. Four Dollars.

attributes and aptitudes that makes the prolific writer, and given learning besides, here is the almost perfect machine for the making of text-books on Rationalism.

Quite a number of other English Freethinkers come into the pages of his history, and of them all, Mr. Macdonald seems to seize upon some salient characteristic in his own witty way, give us an epigram upon it.

Of the American Freethinkers other than Ingersoll are many fine descriptions. Mr. Macdonald loved Samuel Palmer Putnam, and it is with a restrained pen, he narrates his unlucky death. Putnam was outspoken, advanced and fearless, and his *Four Hundred Years of Freethought* is already a classic, and will become all the more valuable as time goes on. There was Lemuel K. Washburn, who wrote for very many years wise and witty "Editorials" for the *Truth Seeker*, and died aged eighty-one years in 1927. "His death," says Mr. Macdonald, "was the most important single loss to the cause since the death of F. M. Macdonald." There was John M. Remsburg, who died at the age of seventy-two, and "was perhaps the youngest soldier in the Union Army" in the great Civil War. Remsburg's two books, *The Bible and The Christ*, cannot be beaten in their own way. They are a splendid aid to the Freethought controversialist. Remsburg, also wrote a fine little work on Thomas Paine, and in twenty years delivered more than 3,000 lectures. One could go on quoting but the reader should go to the book itself for dozens of names of fighting Freethinkers who kept the flag flying, often under misfortune and obloquy. Of women Freethinkers, there are quite a number—Marilla M. Ricker, for example, whose pet "aversion" were Jonathan Edwards and Theodore Roosevelt." Her heroes were Paine and Ingersoll. Matilda Joslyn Gage, Helen Gardener and Elizabeth Cady Stanton were three others who left their mark on contemporary thought—particularly on the question of woman suffrage. None of them believed that Christianity was woman's best friend. And so one could go on quoting records and opinions, but even a review has to come to an end sometimes. Mr. Macdonald's two volumes are intensely interesting, not merely as history, but as a personal record. His was an ideal marriage, and his references to his "partner" and his boys prove that Ingersoll was not the only happy father and husband. The two books are beautifully printed on fine paper, and are profusely illustrated with drawings and many valuable portraits. Says Mr. Macdonald on his closing page:—

I doubt I should have the courage to accept youth as a gift. Not long ago I asked the wife if she should care to try life over again. She thought not. The joy was in exploration and encountering the unexpected. We might miss some of the fun next time.

They are brave words. Mr. Macdonald is waiting for the "nightfall," but I still hope we shall have another ten years of his history—record and fun combined. For the fight is not over yet.

H. CUTNER.

Language is not only the vehicle of thought, it is a great and efficient instrument in thinking.—*Sir H. Davy.*

He is best served who has no occasion to put the hands of others at the end of his arms.—*Cervantes.*

Those mouth-made vows, which break themselves in swearing.—*Shakespeare.*

Brains begins great works; labour alone finishes them.—*Joubert.*

The Idealist View of Existence.

"Philosophy is the self-correction by mind of its own initial excess of subjectivity."—*A. N. Whitehead*

MODERN Idealism, from Descartes to Jeans, has undergone an interesting evolution, the main landmarks of which can here be indicated.

Running alongside, and lacking tenable connection with, his Materialism, was Descartes' separation of "body" and "thought," which left to his successors the pretty task of explaining their co-existence and connection. One line of thought proceeded via Berkeley's "to exist is to be perceived," which leads to some curious conclusions.

Does this chair exist? Yes, as an object of some percipient. Am I that percipient? If so, I exist. But to exist is to be perceived. Who perceives me? Who perceives my percipient . . . ? Is there a percipient who is himself not perceived? But, *ex hypothesi*, not to be perceived is not to exist.

And again, are phenomena really *my* objects. If so, why do I have to object a chair? Why cannot I object a rhinoceros? It is my own private affair. Both experiences, "rhino" and "chair," have something in common, viz., perception. Therefore there must be something more to account for the difference; something external.

Further, what happens to my "chair" when my back is turned? My percipience no longer affords it existence. Because everything found is known about, must knowing be a universal condition of being? And am I the author of *Hamlet*? Berkeley introduced "God" to accommodate chairs and tables and rhinoceroses in our absence, thus stabilising externality in the name of the Lord.

The move was inadequate. Only Rashdall, another cleric, has in recent times attempted to revive the Berkeleyan system. Phenomena are no longer *my* objects; they are God's. Does God exist? If so, he is perceived. By whom? Who perceives God's percipient? and the discussion becomes insipid. In short, *esse=percipi* is useless; it demands that mind shall be everywhere at all times, and issues in a universe non-existent. At best, Berkeley did something to remove a lazy naive realism; at worst, his dictum lowered the prestige of metaphysics, which became "the blind man in a dark room trying to catch a black cat that isn't there."

There was nothing for it but to return to an honest dualism, which came, after some astute criticism by Hume, with the help of the Kantian Categories. Phenomena pointed to an external existence, a Thing-in-Itself, which, though not existentially dependent on mind, was caught by the mind into a number of categories (*e.g.*, space, time, causality) which gave it form. The influence of Kant is instanced to-day by Viscount Haldane, who regards meaning as essential to outer experience, which exists only for mind, which is foundational [Human Experience, and Reign of Relativity]. According to Realist criticism the Kantian error rests on a confusion between a priori knowledge and a priori conditions of knowledge; reason is not a little man within a man; it is a name for the continuation of that same process which in its lowest stages is called sense-perception.

But science is monistic, disliking unnecessary extravagance in hypothesis, and so it is only natural that the Hegelian development is the one most favoured to-day. There is here no impassable gulf between mind and matter, and the father of the movement was undoubtedly Spinoza.

About his time there were some odd attempts to explain how "body" and "mind" got on so well together. They nowhere touched, but ran perfectly

parallel in harmony (Psychophysical Parallelism): or, God butted in at every turn to make mutual response (Geulincx' Occasionalism), or, God acted as the mirror in which the outer world appeared to us (Malebranche); or, existence was a colony of spiritual units, who co-existed according to a pre-established harmony (Leibnitz). Spinoza simplified matters and used "God" as his one principle of existence, of whom body and thought were two attributes.

Spinozism has never faded into nothingness. Of late it was held by J. A. Picton, and, with variations, by others. "Without Spinoza," said Hegel, "no philosophy," and the same speaker fathered that "metaphysical monster" (James), the Absolute. At first pre-existent idea, the Absolute descends into unconscious nature, awakens in man; and realizes itself in Values, in an effort to return to itself as perfect fulfilment.

Idealism had by now detracted largely from the dignity of the individual and had shifted the responsibility for the uniformity of externality on a mind transcendent or continental. This lessens the status of the individual and his chances of immortality (of which belief Hegel was no friend). The Absolute has been revived by Bradley, Bosanquet, and (to-day) by Webb, Taylor, Croce and Gentile; only in the case of the ecclesiastics, Webb and Taylor, is it made to hang together with immortality.

An attempt to re-instate the individual has been made in the form of "Monadologies" (Ward, McTaggart, Carr), while Hocking, in U.S.A., following Fichte, conceives externality as the non-ego thrown out by the ego, which requires something to work on and rebound from.

Another approach to Idealism lies in scientific analysis. Ultimate substance is itself mental or spiritual (Eddington), a theory bearing comparison with oriental systems. In the Vedanta it is Brahma; for Schopenhauer the substratum was Will; with Fechner souls animate all objects; v. Hartmann championed the Unconscious; Wundt, "will-atoms"; while Mrs. Besant employs the Conception of a World-Self, of which we are the rays; and a recent work from a Theosophist (Sutcliffe) bears the title, *Astronomy and Cosmic Physiology*.

* * *

According to various forms of the Idealist view now current,

Existence is a colony of spiritual monads.

Or, Substance is spiritual.

Or, Absolute Mind exists, and ejects phenomena.

Or, We finite minds partake in the nature of the Absolute, and use substance as musician to instrument.

In the case of the first two statements it would seem that if lower orders of existence are already mental no room is left for emergence, which is a fact. Matter obviously is not mind as we know it, and to say it is a rudimentary form is merely to acknowledge the essential continuity of all existence, while rendering a term, mind, useless for its specific purpose.

Opponents of the Idealistic philosophy are wont to object, "If your theory is true, what becomes of astronomy, history and science? Are all these illusory?" Gentile, in Italy, and possibly Jeans, in this country, have attempted an answer. According to Gentile, the entire past is "fossilized" thought; that is, thought which has been "thunk," and is now presented to us in its fossilized form. For Jeans, the chief characteristic of him who ejects phenomena is ability in mathematics.

But the insuperable objection to all Idealisms is undoubtedly the verdict of science on the human mind.

Science says that, so far from everything else being a manifestation of mind, mind is itself the manifestation of something else; and, to avert the ruin, Idealism has employed the conception of a mind that is not a mind, and quite different from any mind we know of. So far from being the governor and sustainer of the universe, mind is only possible as a rarity, where there are complexes of atoms, relatively stable, shielded from excess of radiation, and kept going by the sun's energy.

Nor is mind so sudden an emergent as would suggest an extra-natural hand in the matter. It has analogy in lower forms. Sensitiveness is reduplicated, e.g., in the mimosa plant; self-initiated movement in insectivorous plants and inorganic dynamos; nutrition in inorganic catalysis; reproduction in the elective multiplication of crystals.

The musician analogy is worthy of churchmen rather than philosophers. We are to suppose that when the instrument (brain) is impaired, the quality of the music suffers, but, when the instrument is crushed to dust, the musician goes on playing without an instrument. But the analogy is quite inapplicable from another point of view, for the simple reason that a musician rules his instrument *from the outside*. Mental facts are not a manifestations of "mind." They *are* mind.

* * *

Faced with the unsurmountable difficulty of constructing a universe egocentric, and kind to our desires, Idealism has fallen back on the concept of an absolute mind, which contains existence as an act of thought. Logically, we finite minds are part of the thought, possessing an indiscriminate mixture of true and false theories, and reduced to an Absolute Fatalism, for our philosophy. The Jeansian God is the state to which Idealism is reduced; It is Deity rescued at the price of certain immortality; it is Idealism crying out from behind a battered front, *Nil Desperandum*.

G. H. TAYLOR.

Competitive Missions.

THERE is a "world competition" in missions among various religious bodies. Islam seeks to convert Christendom and Christendom seeks to convert the Orientals. Buddha proclaims his doctrines in the West: Christ proclaims his in the East. To the detached observer there is much in the peculiar situation that is bewildering and perplexing. Several missionary agencies, whose Churches affect to minimize and even hold in contempt naturalistic and humanitarian methods use these very methods to gain the attention and confidence of the alien populations among whom they work.

It is clear, particularly at this moment, that many Christians are disturbed by the failure to indoctrinate the peoples whom their missionaries seek to influence—peoples who have renounced their original religious faiths. Thus, for instance, with regard to West Africa one Christian writer observes: "Civilization is advancing with extraordinary rapidity, but the Christian Church lags far behind, and the failure to make the Christian Faith keep pace with the destruction of primitive beliefs, which civilization everywhere carries with it, is creating a problem of infinitely greater complexity and difficulty than indigenous faiths present." Another writer says, "If the goal of Christian missions is a great Christian Church of Africa, then missions must sink their differences and work together for its establishment." This is doubtless the expression of a feeling that has been

entertained by Christians at home for a considerable time; and it is reflected in the efforts that are being made in Europe and America for unions or reunions of ecclesiastical bodies—efforts so far made with but very partial success. In Britain the great obstacles are, of course, the Roman Catholic and the extreme Protestant. There is, however, a growing body of opinion in the Episcopal Churches of Britain which would go a very long way to identify itself with Rome in essentials, while the English Nonconformists and English, Scottish and Irish Presbyterians still fulminate against the Papacy.

When Mr. Gandhi began his propaganda on behalf of India, the first Western support of a cordial kind which he received was from the Quakers of America—the disciples and successors of William Lloyd Garrison, by whom the Manifesto of Non-resistance was published in 1838. Influenced probably by them, Quakers in Britain and a number of pacific-minded Nonconformists and Presbyterians took a stand against die-hard denunciations of the Mahatma; and as time has passed and the influence and importance of Mr. Gandhi with reference to the problem of India have been demonstrated with increasing clearness to be very great there has been an accession to the number of his sympathisers here. But some Christians among these sympathisers have lately been pulled up with a rather unpleasant jolt. When the position of Christian missionaries in India was put to Mr. Gandhi and his views about their activities were desiderated, he expressed the considered opinion that so long as they in the main devoted themselves to teaching the practice of good western methods—in such matters as personal health, sanitation, etc.—and to nursing and medical treatment, and refrained from proselytizing he would appreciate and welcome their presence in India; but if their chief object was to secure proselytes—then probably they would be better away.

Mr. Gandhi in so expressing himself appears to appreciate the dangers, hazards and obstacles inevitably associated with a number of competing and warring religious sects in any community to real social and cultural development. He wants to see the masses of his own land uplifted to a level of existence which will combine all the best refinements of East and West. And one need not be misrepresenting him if (reading between the lines) it is suggested that Mr. Gandhi has no particular use for supernaturalism, though he would not be a believer in inhibitions upon any kind of opinion or belief. In this view one is disposed to regard him as an advocate of the widest tolerance. But he is quite evidently opposed to the proselytizer; and if the missionary is to be that, he has no use for him.

It is difficult for us to compare the beliefs of the East with those of the West, because most of the so-called Eastern "Faiths" or "Religions" are really in essence Philosophies, and not frankly *supernatural* religions, which appropriately describe the Christian Churches of Europe and America. Happily we do upon occasion find Freethinkers in positions of influence abroad, who hold up the golden lamps of naturalism and humanism as the bases of the best for the highest personal development without any dependence whatever upon upon a supernatural traditionalism, which really can only find an entrance to the clouded or feeble minds of illiterate and ignorant persons. This has always been the sign of superstition in its most real sense and truest meaning. Supernaturalists of different sects call those who do not share their particular creed persons bound by superstition! This is only a case of the pot calling the kettle black! When an epidemic

comes nowadays, people do not rush in frenzied hysteria to the Churches to weep and pray. They see to the drains.

The more man finds and realizes himself the less does supernaturalism matter. The greatest thing in the world is Man, and the greatest thing in Man is Mind. The myths, equivocations and fictions of the supernatural are but the shadows of man's early dreams. We will help and elevate our fellow beings (of any race or colour) by teaching them the scientific means of self-preservation, self-defence, self-education (in studying the masters of literature and science and art) and of self expression, so that they in *their* turn shall be equipped for the task of communicating the same knowledge and teaching to those about them. Supernaturalism, however dressed up, is ever primitive, and keeps the minds of men in a degraded dependence.

IGNOTUS.

Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

CONVERSION.

SIR,—I have read with considerable interest F.N.B.'s letter in your issue dated the 12th inst., concerning the factors responsible for his conversion from the Christian belief to the philosophy of Atheism.

Like F.N.B., I was once a Christian, but the reasons for my conversion differ from his in that I was initially influenced by factors completely outside the Church.

Some three or four years ago, I became interested in the Darwinian Theory which appeared to offer a more feasible explanation of the origin of life than that or those found in Genesis. I accordingly read as many books as possible on the subjects of Evolution and Natural History, and found that God was not necessary to change that huge barren cinder of which the earth consisted prior to the coming of life, into a garden pussat—that a supposedly omniscient and omnipotent God using a means like Evolution to attain perfection would be definitely sub-human, while the minds of those Christians who would equate their god with Evolution must be lower than the present-day gorilla.

In spite of this, however, I must confess that for some time after leaving the Christian fold, I continued to regard its God in a favourable light, presumably as a result of my earlier teachings, and it was only after much thought that I began to regard the object of Christian worship as being unworthy even of the contempt of a sane person.

With the exception of one sceptical friend, I was, as far as I was aware, alone in my opinions amongst those living in my district, but I later found amongst others, a "saint" of very strong Atheist inclinations, who introduced me to the *Freethinker*, an introduction I have never regretted.

My initial Agnostic opinions were strong, and to my mind well founded, but a year's reading of the *Freethinker* has changed my Agnosticism to militant Atheism, and now I too, feel it to be both a duty and a pleasure to try and save those of my friends who are Christians from the mental bondage their beliefs incur.

C. C. CRAINE.

That nation is worthless which does not joyfully stake everything on her honour.—*Schiller*.

Beware of an ox before, of a mule behind, and of a monk on every side.—*Spanish Proverb*.

Every man carries heaven and hell within him in this world.—*Böhme*.

The sincere alone can recognize sincerity.—*Carlyle*.

National Secular Society.

REPORT OF EXECUTIVE MEETING HELD JULY 24, 1931.

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

Also present: Messrs. Quinton, Clifton, Silvester, Easterbrook, Le Maine, Ebury, McLaren, Mrs. Quinton, Junr., Mrs. Venton, Miss Kough, and the Secretary.

A number of apologies for absence through holidays were read.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and adopted, and the monthly financial statement presented.

New members were admitted as follows, Bradford, Brighton, Birmingham, Liverpool, Fulham and Chelsea, W. London, West Ham, N. London, Birkenhead Branches, and the Parent Society. Permission to form a Branch of the N.S.S. at Birkenhead, to be known as the Birkenhead (Wirral) Branch was given.

Under correspondence matters concerning Montreal, Glasgow, Liverpool, Bradford, and Birkenhead were dealt with, and instructions given.

The Executive endorsed the President's action in reference to Perth and Durham.

Reports of lectures given by Messrs. Brighton and Clayton were submitted.

The receipt of a bequest of £50 to the N.S.S. was reported. A proposal to help desirable speakers by a gift or loan of books was discussed, and adjourned for preparation of details. For the encouragement of speakers a study circle was proposed, and Mr. A. D. McLaren was asked, and agreed to take control. Publication of Executive's Annual Report for 1931 for distribution was sanctioned. Motions remitted from the Annual Conference were dealt with, No. 9 being held over till next meeting, to be held on September 18.

R. H. ROSETTI,
General Secretary.

TO GLASGOW FREETHINKERS.—Freethinkers in Glasgow and District are invited to call at the Freethought bookstall at the juncture of West Regent Street and Renfield 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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SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

LONDON.

OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N.S.S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand): 3.15, Mrs. E. Grout—"What is Wrong with Christianity?"

FULHAM AND CHELSEA BRANCH N.S.S. (corner of Shorrolds Road, North End Road): Wednesday, 7.30, Messrs. Haskell and Day; Saturday, 7.30, Messrs. Barnes and Bryant. *Freethinker* on sale at both meetings.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S.—No meeting.

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, Sunday at 7.30, Mr. L. Ebury; Wednesday, August 5, at Rushcroft Road, near Brixton Town Hall, at 8.0, Mr. L. Ebury; Friday, August 7, at Liverpool Street, Camberwell Gate, at 8.0, Mr. L. Ebury.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 12.0, Mr. B. A. Le Maine; 3.30, Messrs. C. E. Wood and C. Tuson; 6.30, Messrs. A. H. Hyatt, A. D. McLaren, B. A. Le Maine and E. C. Saphin. Every Wednesday, at 7.30, Messrs. C. E. Wood and C. Tuson; every Thursday, at 7.0, Messrs. E. C. Saphin and J. Darby; every Friday, at 7.30, Messrs. A. D. McLaren and B. A. Le Maine. Current *Freethinkers* can be obtained opposite the Park Gates, on the corner of Edgware Road, during and after the meetings.

WEST HAM BRANCH N.S.S.—No meeting.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Ravenscourt Park, Hammersmith): 3.30, Messrs. Bryant and C. Tuson.

COUNTRY.

OUTDOOR.

ACCRINGTON MARKET.—Sunday, August 2, at 7.0—Mr. J. Clayton.

BRIGHTON BRANCH N.S.S.—Saturday, at 8.0, opposite the Open Market, inside the Level. Sunday, at 3.30, the Level, speakers Messrs. Jackson, Byrne and G. de Lacey.

BURNLEY (Hebrew Road).—Monday, August 3, at 8.0—Mr. J. Clayton.

BURNLEY MARKET.—Sunday, August 2, at 3.15—Mr. J. Clayton.

DARLINGTON (Market Steps).—Sunday, August 2, at 7.30, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

EAST LANCASHIRE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION (28 Bridge Street, Burnley): Sunday, August 9, A Ramble to Roughlee. Meet outside Palace Theatre, Burnley Center, at 1.0 p.m. Nelson friends meet top of Carr Road, at 1.30 p.m. Tea and Games at Roughlee. (Paddling, Swimming, and Boating). Bring the children. All East Lancashire Freethinkers and friends are invited. Members of the Manchester Branch of the N.S.S. specially invited. At 7.45 p.m., a meeting will be held on Carr Road Recreation Ground, Nelson, speaker Mr. Jack Clayton.

GLASGOW BRANCH N.S.S.—Saturday, August 1, West Regent Street, at 7.30, Sunday, August 2, at Alexandra Park Gates, at 7.0, Mr. G. Whitehead (London) will lecture.

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

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE (Bigg Market).—Wednesday, August 5, at 8.0, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

SEAHAM HARBOUR.—Saturday, August 1, at 7.0, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

TODMORDEN MARKET.—Thursday, August 6, at 8.0—Mr. J. Clayton.

WIGAN (Market Square).—Sunday, August 2, at 3.0 and 7.0, Messrs. W. H. Sisson and H. Hankin.

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Secularism affirms that Progress is only possible through Liberty, which is at once a right and a duty; and therefore seeks to remove every barrier to the fullest equal freedom of thought, action, and speech.

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