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Views and Opinions.

Intolerance in Religion.

PROBABLY most people have heard the story of the Scotch preacher who delivered a discourse on "Courage in Controversy." Difficulties, he explained, should not be evaded, they should be faced. And he proceeded, "The text we have before us is one of these difficulties. But we must not evade it, we must look it boldly in the face, and having done so—we will pass on to another subject." The Rev. Harry Fosdick must surely be a direct descendant of that preacher. He writes in the Christian World, an article dealing with persecution and asks his readers:

What is it that makes religious persecution so bitter, and so much more bitter than any other kind of controversy? Listen to this: "Had I heard my father or mother or brother saying such things against my Master Christ, I would have broken their blasphemous jaws like those of a mad dog." Well, well, who is talking to whom there? That is just one Christian talking about another. That is St. Jerome expressing his opinion of Origen. Across the centuries, as you know, that kind of talk has always been going on. Religion ought to unite people. It ought to be the fruitful mother of kindness and fraternity. Why is it, then, that it has divided them by the bitterest lines in the world.

Now that is asking a very pertinent question. Dr. Fosdick is a preacher who believes in looking difficulties in the face. He looks at them with the unflinching courage of a soldier facing a firing-party—on the stage. And having looked the difficulty in the face—he passes on. He quite forgets to give an answer.

What Religion Does.

But it is worth while attempting to give the omitted answer? There is no question that accom-

panying religious differences there is a bitterness, a readiness to persecute that does not exist to an equal extent with any other subject. Men will differ on all other subjects, and while there may be quarrels or bad feeling, the right to differ will not be questioned, and in the main the differences will be discussed in a tolerably good humoured manner. In religion this is never the case. A congress of religions, in which differences of religion were discussed is unthinkable. You may have religious views stated from different points of view, but that is all, and even then, attention will be chiefly directed towards points of agreement. In ordinary social life discussions on religion are discouraged, and the explanation is they lead to bad feeling. In clubs, sporting and social, discussions on religion are usually barred, again the explanation is they would wreck the organization. In the late war, when men belonging to all kinds of religion lived together, ate together, slept together fought together and died together, the one thing that kept them apart was religion. And even in prison, while Catholics and Protestants, Jews and Christians may join in perpetrating all sorts of crime, they demand that they shall be separate when the time comes for a religious service. In all social matters, whether they be good or bad, lawful or criminal, men will join in a common life governed by common feelings, and displaying the common amenities. When it comes to religion every man demands to go to hell, or the other place, by his own special train and to travel along his own special road. Dr. Fosdick is right, there is nothing so divisive as religion, there is nothing that rouses such bitter feelings. But Dr. Fosdick believes religion to be the basis of brotherhood and good fellowship. Facts never matter where a religious theory is concerned.

* * *

The Roots of Persecution.

So general a fact, one that is independent of country or race, which applies to religions ancient and modern, and which is only less obtrusive as non-religious forces operate more effectively, demands a wide-spread and deeply-seated cause. And, as I have before pointed out, the root explanation can be found in the place held by religion in primitive society. Here everything is under the influence of the tribal ghosts or gods. Good and ill-fortune, good and ill-health, all depend upon the will of those mysterious beings with which man believes he is surrounded. And these primitive gods are terribly casual and wonderfully vindictive. If they are offended everybody may suffer, much as some of our own religious imbecilities to-day believe that the established national Joss may wither the crops, or bring about a war, or let loose an epidemic, and so punish everyone, because some members of the tribe have offended him. In secular affairs man may make a mistake, in religion his mis-

takes become crimes against the Gods. And religion is not directly subject to those checks and corrections that govern secular matters. What assumes the character of religious persecution in after times, is at first little more than an act of self-protection. The man who offends the gods is an enemy to the well-being of all. His suppression is a social duty, essentially an act of social sanitation.

A direct consequence of this is that intolerance is directly associated with religion from the outset. It is checked, and in time partly controlled by the growth of secular experience and knowledge, but it is always there. In both ancient Rome and ancient Greece we can see the decline of this primitive religious intolerance, although it was never completely absent from ancient society. Its re-establishment came with Christianity—which furnishes yet another example of a reversion to a lower type. Dr. Fosdick cites St. Jerome as being ready to treat his parent like a mad dog if he offended his religion, and he might have quoted St. Augustine as refusing to sit at the same table with heretics, or even Cardinal Bourne, who the other day set forth the impossibility of Roman Catholics praying by the side of Protestants. Religion divides men as nothing else divides them, it causes them to hate each other as does nothing else. After the most brutal of wars men will settle down together and gradually forget the hatreds of yesterday. But with religion it is a duty to keep that hatred alive. Religion is the one thing that exalts malevolence to the level of a virtue.

* * *

Moralizing Intolerance.

Intolerance grew weak in the ancient civilized world, because neither Rome nor Greece possessed the unadulterated curse of a "sacred book," and there was nothing to effectively check the growth of the forces of sympathy and social development. Intolerance and religious persecution in the ancient world represented a decaying phenomenon. It was left for the Christian Church to revive it, to rationalize it and to moralize it. The ancient world had left no legal machinery for the carrying out the work of religious persecution. The Christian Church filled the vacancy. The older it grew the more intolerant it became, until, as a final stroke of genius it created the Inquisition. There never has been in the whole history of the world an instrument of persecution so perfectly damnable as the Christian Church. While the Catholic Church stood unchallenged it had its own courts and compelled the secular powers to carry out its sentences. When Protestantism arose and created a State Church, it made persecution part of its duties. There were special courts and special laws for the punishment of religious offences. But the greatest triumph of all was not so much the creation of a police force for the enforcement of religious conformity, as the manner in which the Church made every man a spy on his fellow man, and so terrified and distorted the human conscience that it made men and women afraid to think lest they should be led to doubt. And just as in so many other directions, Christianity provided the finest excuse for the gratification of the lower passions under cover of a pretended exercise of the higher qualities, so it took this native vice of intolerance and gave it a moral value such as no other institution has ever succeeded in giving it. In science, or in politics men shrink from being thought intolerant, or they resent the charge that they will not look at what can be said against them. In religion men pride themselves on these things as evidence of profound Christian conviction. And so they are.

I once called this establishment and moralization of the principle of intolerance "Christianity's Crown-

ing Crime," and I take that to be a scientifically accurate description. Nothing else—the falsification of records, the palming off of impostures on the people, slander of opponents, even the hundreds of thousands of men and women that have been put to death—had quite the demoralizing influence that the socializing of intolerance by the Church had. Necessarily it gave cowardice and hypocrisy the place that should have been occupied by courage and straightforwardness. For many generations the Church took the intellectually daring and honest and destroyed them. It selected the lowest type to perpetuate the race, and it raised each generation in an atmosphere of terror, with a deadly fear of questioning established beliefs. From the region of religion it spread to other departments of life. It debased the moral currency by robbing society of the value of intellectual honesty, a sense of the importance of independent opinion. And to-day religion remains as intolerant as ever. It still persecutes where it can and how it can. People write and talk of the humanizing of religion. It cannot be done. You cannot reform it, you can only end it.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

Bamboozling Believers.

"Tradition means giving votes to the most obscure of all classes, our ancestors. It is the democracy of the dead."
G. K. Chesterton.

THE clergy seldom admit their fear of Freethought. In pulpit and on platform they are boastful and as bold as brass. They never seem to tire of the boastful refrain, "Who's afraid?" Behind the scenes, however, they arrange quietly the means of retreat. Fortunately for civilization retreat is the order of the day, and will continue to be so. Since Freethought has been organized the Army of the Lord has had no rest. The frontal attacks of the Freethinkers are beginning to tell heavily, and the clergy are getting extremely nervous. Camouflage is being resorted to. The "Book of Common Prayer" of the English State Church has been pruned of some of the most objectionable features; and special juvenile editions of the Christian Bible have been prepared so carefully that nothing is permitted to remain which would offend the susceptibilities of adolescent youth. These astute clerical manoeuvres may help to deceive believers for a time, but it will not save the Christian Religion from the fate of Druidism.

The priestly strategy is clever, but it cannot serve for long. To prune the barbarities of the "Psalms" may spare the blushes of Christian ladies and young clergymen, but it is a very risky and hazardous proceeding. The cure is as dangerous as the disease itself. The "Psalms" are an integral and important part of Holy Writ, and "David," the "man after God's own heart," is so closely allied with the legendary figure of Christ to be thrown thus rudely and unceremoniously to the rubbish-heap without disastrous results to Orthodoxy. It is not only a policy of despair in this particular instance, but a precedent which will exert, in the long run, anything but a happy effect upon the entire Christian position.

These "Psalms" were written many centuries ago and have been regarded by religious folks as inspired utterances. Now, the clergy treat "King David" with high-sniffing contempt, as if he were an organ who had dared to suggest a decent wage, or a vessel who had gained too much publicity in the newspapers. It is "too deep for tears."

What is wrong with these "Psalms"? The demagogic clergy, in mincing accents, declare that they are "Christian" in character, which is a polite way of saying

ing that they are utterly out of harmony with modern ideas. This is the sort of thing that the solicitous clergy do not wish their innocent congregations to read:—

The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance; he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked. So that a man shall say, verily there is a reward for the righteous, verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth.

The quotation is not pretty, nor edifying, and it is not in any way remarkable for its "spirituality." Unhappily, so many portions of the Christian Bible are open to as serious objection, as, for instance, the unlvely passage:—

When he shall be judged, let him be condemned; and let his prayer become sin. Let his days be few; and let another take his office. Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow. Let his children be continually vagabonds, and beg, let them seek their bread also out of their desolate places.

And again, here is another example of frightfulness:—

Happy shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones.

Observe that the dear clergy have themselves started to pull "God's Word" to pieces. They have bowdlerized the "Psalms," and "David" thus comes in for tardy, but none the less deserved rebuke. "David" is now admitted by the clergy to be a savage, and the defenders of Orthodoxy are obliged to throw the old Oriental barbarian overboard in order to absolve their own deity from the crimes and vices of his favourite.

Let there be no mistake concerning this action of the clergy. They are in full retreat. They have been forced to admit that the "Book of Common Prayer" of the English State Church is out of date and out of harmony with modern ideas. The language and tone of the marriage service, for example, is utterly inconsistent with the present position of woman. The book is far too monarchical in sentiment, containing prayers for individual members of the Royal Family, whilst the entire Democracy is fobbed off with a few vague sentences. In other words, the "Book of Common Prayer" itself is past praying for in a country claiming to be civilized.

If the clergy themselves are compelled to admit that their Prayer Book is so faulty, what is to be said concerning the Christian Bible? This sacred volume is open to all the objections of the State Prayer Book, and more. This Oriental Bible is full of questionable matter. From the first error in "Genesis" to the final absurdity in "Revelation," much of the writing is out of harmony with twentieth century civilization. In far too many places in the earlier books of this Bible the pages are full of the scuffles of savages, whose arrows are "drunk with blood," to adapt its own delicate phraseology. There are also many passages which can no longer be read aloud in the presence of a mixed congregation. As for the New Testament, the moral perceptions of the present-day are shocked by the awful doctrine of eternal punishment, to say nothing of the still more awful dogma of Hell fire.

The dear clergy know all these things, and are seeking to camouflage these horrors so as to retain the respect of their congregations, and, incidentally, safeguard their comfortable salaries.

This clerical move of mutilating their own Bible is not a paltry matter. The Christian Bible is not an ordinary book. It is stamped as God's Word by Act of Parliament. It is forced, including the "Psalms," and all its unseemly passages into the hands of children in schools. It is used as a fetish for swearing

upon in Courts of Law. Men and women have even been punished for criticizing it. And, now, the dear clergy are actually admitting the force of that Free-thought criticism, which they once denounced so loudly and so insistently. It is the final act of the divine comedy, the beginning of the end of the Christian Religion. Christianity has failed, not because it is a religion, but because the cultural side of our civilization is more adequate.

MIMNERMUS.

Christianity and Paganism.

(Concluded from page 564.)

It would take too long to go into the cause of the greatness and prosperity of the Roman Empire. Suffice it to say that the main cause was, to put it shortly, that when Rome subdued an enemy, far from wishing to crush it out of existence, she allowed it to carry on under its own institutions, in so far as they did not clash with the laws of the Empire; while her legions protected it from outside aggression. The Empire conferred the inestimable boon of the *Pax Romana*, the Roman Peace. It put down piracy, brigandage, and lawlessness with a strong hand. Across the frontiers the barbarians were constantly on the watch to break through the hedge of spears, at the first favourable opportunity.

"Thine, Roman, is the pilum;
Roman, the sword is thine,
The even trench, the bristling mound
The legion's ordered line;"¹²

Not because the Romans loved fighting for its own sake, but because it was a necessity for their very existence, the wars under the Empire were entirely defensive. The conquered races soon became reconciled under the beneficent Roman rule, and, eventually proud of their citizenship in the mighty Empire, under whose strong hands the roads and highways by land and sea were made safe for commerce as they had never been before, and were destined never to be again for more than a thousand years after the collapse of the Empire.

Under these conditions the population of the Empire prospered exceedingly. Merchants became wealthy, and they did not selfishly hoard their wealth but spent it in the public service, making their towns and cities—which sprang up wherever the legions set foot—splendid with buildings for public use and recreation. "For centuries," says Professor Reid, "the outflow of private wealth for public purposes was great and incessant throughout the towns of the ancient world. If the material resources of that age and this be compared, it will be seen that the ancients far outshone the moderns in generosity directed to public ends."¹³ Says the same historian: "Every ancient city was ambitious that its public buildings, with costly artistic decorations, should rival those of other cities which came into comparison with it, and resources were not uncommonly strained in the competition."¹⁴ And further:—

The passion in the old world for nobility in all the instruments and appurtenances of public and common life, which gave to insignificant towns, buildings and adornments that would now, if perfect, enable them to rival in interest many of the most considerable modern capitals. The civic pride in such possessions and rivalry between city and city

¹² Macaulay: *The Prophecy of Capys*.

¹³ J. S. Reid: *The Municipalities of the Roman Empire*, p. 14.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* p. 459.

in respect to them have practically died out of the modern world. (J. S. Reid: *The Municipalities of the Roman Empire*. p. 494.)

Says Sir Samuel Dill, in that fine study of Roman civilization under the Empire: "The great Stoic doctrine of the brotherhood and equality of men, as members of a world-wide commonwealth, which was destined to inspire legislation in the Antonine age, was openly preached in the reigns of Caligula and Nero."¹⁵ And further:—

The material splendour and municipal life in the Antonine Age are externally its greatest glory. It was pre-eminently a sociable age, an age of cities. From the wall of Hadrian to the edge of the Sahara towns sprang up everywhere with as yet a free civic life. It was an age of engineers and architects, who turned villages into cities and built cities in the desert, adorned with temples and stately arches and basilicas, and feeding their fountains from the springs of distant hills. The rich were popular and never had they to pay so heavily for popularity and power. (S. Dill: *Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius*. p. 4.)

But there was no compulsion in the matter; they paid willingly and gladly: "The lavish generosity of Pliny is a commonplace of social history," says the same historian, but "there were many men and women in obscure municipalities all over the world, who were as generous and public-spirited as Pliny." (p. 193.) We know from Roman history, say those very able historians of labour J. L. and Barbara Hammond: "how great an importance was given to public beauty; how lavishly the rich, and even the middle classes, spent their money on theatres, baths, libraries, and temples; how widely, as Greenidge put it, the supply to the poor of what we call luxuries was deemed an obligation of wealth. The civilization of that Empire is known as Graeco-Roman, just because it kept this Greek tradition and spread it under different forms all over the Western World."¹⁶ Against this the same writers present a picture of the towns in our own country when great fortunes were being made during the eighteenth and down to the middle of the nineteenth centuries:—

A visitor coming from the ancient world to Manchester and Leeds in 1830 would have been struck by their wealth, but he would have noticed that it was wealth owned by private persons and displayed, where it was displayed, in private magnificence. For though the new Englishman was richer than the Greek or the Roman, the new English city was poorer than the Greek or Roman city: poorer in its looks, its possessions, its ambitions, and the range and dignity of its desires and enjoyments. The new town had no share in the arts or culture of the time. De Quincey said at the beginning of the century that no great city could present so repulsive an appearance as the Manchester of his day. Lyon Playfair told the Health of Towns Commission in 1844, that in all Lancashire there was only one town, Preston, with a public park, and only one, Liverpool, with public baths. Popular theatres and galleries, public libraries and museums were almost unknown.¹⁷

The immense fortunes made at this period, when England was the workshop of the world, were spent by the makers upon their own selfish gratification: "Private splendour was as much a mark of the early industrial age as public meanness; the elegance of the great house as the gracelessness of the new town. The great house symbolized the pride the great lord

took in his place in the national life. The mansion, with its libraries, galleries, parks, reflected the atmosphere of authority of history, of taste and manners, of a life active, spacious, and delightful." (p. 347.) The governing class drew those who acquired wealth into its orbit: "Hence the uninvested wealth of the Industrial Revolution was largely used for creating new territorial families with mansions and estates in the country." (p. 348.) A very large number of these immense princely mansions in London have been pulled down since the war, simply because the cost of their upkeep was too great. Fergusson, the great authority on Architecture, says that "There were probably at least a couple of hundred of these great manorial mansions erected in England and Scotland during the course of the eighteenth century."¹⁸ And nine-tenths of them, he tells us, were stone.

As for the part of Christianity played in the fall of the Roman Empire we shall deal with that in our next article.

W. MANN.

Matthew Tindal the Deist.

THE son of a clergyman, Matthew Tindal was a leading exponent of eighteenth century rationalism. He first saw the sun in Devonshire about 1657. While at Oxford he studied jurisprudence, held a law fellowship at All Souls' College, and entered Doctor's Commons in London as an advocate. In 1685 his restless mind led him to embrace Roman Catholicism, but he reverted to Protestantism in 1688.

His earlier essays attracted little attention, but in 1706, when Tindal was approaching fifty, he published a work that awakened considerable interest in religious circles. The title of this book is a long one: *The Rights of the Christian Church, asserted against the Romish and all other Priests who claim an Independent Power over it*. The sinister influences of the clergy, especially when they claim the right to control the consciences of men are fearlessly exposed. Any Church independent of the temporal power must ever remain opposed to reform. Self-governing and controlling ecclesiastical institutions perpetuate ancient abuses and foster the growth of new ones. They are the inveterate enemies of freedom of conscience. Whenever the clergy have exercised independent authority, nothing save evil has ensued. Where the sovereignty of clericalism is curbed as in Denmark and Holland there we witness the greatest progress and prosperity. The secular State must be supreme both in temporal and spiritual affairs. An independent Church possessing powers of excommunication might eventually override State control of the rights of life and property. Even the secular authority itself cannot claim divine appointment, for Government was originally established by the popular will. Tindal's work is a masterly defence of Erastianism. Naturally, the clergy were enraged and alarmed. Pressure was brought to bear, and the author, publisher and printer were prosecuted. This advertised the book and it ran through four editions.

Tindal proceeded to pen *A Defence of the Rights of the Christian Church*. This work, by order of the Lower House of Parliament was burnt by the common hangman. It was denounced for many years as a perverse infidel production. Gibson, Bishop of London, prepared a pastoral against it, in which he implied that Tindal's essay was designed for the purpose of undermining religion. Tindal answered his critic with *An Address to the Inhabitants of London and*

¹⁵ S. Dill: *Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius*. p. 3.

¹⁶ J. L. and Barbara Hammond: *The Age of the Chartist*. p. 10.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* p. 30.

¹⁸ J. Fergusson: *History of the Modern Styles of Architecture* (1902. Vol II., p. 67.

Westminster. Two editions of this were called for. In this publication Tindal espouses the cause of the Deists, and foreshadows his subsequent work *Christianity as Old as Creation*. This last, Tindal's most famous work ran through four editions in three years, and was stigmatized on the one side, and acclaimed on the other as the Bible of Deism.

Christianity as Old as Creation appeared in 1730. It constitutes an outstanding document in the annals of Freethought. So deeply did it impress men's minds and stir men's passions that it called forth from "first to last," as Mr. J. M. Robertson informs us, "over one hundred and fifty replies, at home and abroad." Tindal's unswerving faith in the benign God of Nature proved firmer than that of his Freethought successors, but his arguments against the divine inspiration and morality of the Scriptures have gathered strength since his time. To Tindal, a pure religion, originally implanted by the benevolent divinity in the hearts of men had been darkened and corrupted by the machinations of an interested and immoral sacerdotal caste. The Hebrew and Christian Scriptures were to him "a mere duplicate of the original document written upon the hearts of men." And he thus sums up his case: "Natural religion, which is of the greatest importance to mankind, and is a perpetual standing rule for men of the meanest, as well as the highest capacity, carries its own evidence with it, those internal inseparable marks of truth; but can that be said of any religion which depends on traditions?"

Tindal was convinced that revelation provided a sorry substitute for the peerless religion manifested in the inimitable masterpieces of the Governor of Nature. But how Tindal could have met Bishop Butler's indictment of Nature, red in tooth and claw, we cannot conceive. Yet, Tindal's contention that the Holy Scriptures possess no internal evidences of morality or reliability proves conclusive. The characters of David and other divine favourites are shown to be anything but edifying. Great Father Abraham is charged with the contraction of an incestuous union with his half sister. And, demands Tindal: "Did he not endeavour to betray her chastity to two kings, in disowning her to be his wife, by which conduct he got from one of them, who entreated him well for her sake, men and maid servants, sheep, oxen, asses and camels; and from the other a thousand pieces of silver, besides sheep, oxen, men and women servants? And immediately afterwards his faith was counted to him for righteousness, did he not doubt of God's promise, till God spoke to him in a deep sleep?"

Tindal's criticisms were not confined to the old dispensation. The moral treatises of the great teachers Aristotle and Cicero in ancient, and those of Grotius and Puffendorf in modern times rise far superior to the ethical sections of the New Testament. While the writings of the Pagan philosophers are clear and consistent the Gospels abound in obscurities and contradictions. The sentimental Socialism of Jesus would in practice subvert the entire social fabric. As for the science of Scripture, Tindal derided the physics of the sacred writers. The tale of the creation of the rainbow in Genesis is palpably absurd. Christ's parable of the seed that is doomed to die before it can germinate is based upon biological ignorance. "There is scarce a countryman so ignorant," comments Tindal, "as not to know, that if the seed thrown into the earth is killed by drought or dies by any other accident, it never rises."

Tindal's Deistic writings powerfully influenced Voltaire, whose ceaseless activities broadcast Freethought throughout the world. The first English Deist to criticize the Scriptures in detail from the ethical standpoint, Tindal proved a splendid pioneer for the later more penetrating and permanent students of the nine-

teenth century in the realms of constructive and destructive Rationalism alike.

Even in our broader day religionists are apt to assume that the sceptic's character is unsound. Yet, in an age when Christian charity was rarer still, the most serious charge urged against Tindal by his spiteful enemies was that of table intemperance. This accusation is confined to gluttony, for when the wine circulated Tindal's triumphs in his verbal combats with his Christian adversaries were freely attributed to the circumstance that he drank much less than they. Indeed, one writer tells us that "he led a life conformable to the sublimest Rules of Morality." Although Tindal's fatal illness was accompanied by the deepest suffering, he met his end with the resolution and resignation of a Stoic. Tindal's writings are those of a man of lofty bearing inspired by earnestness and sincerity. There is nothing in his compositions that even remotely resembles the snarling animadversions and libidinous suggestiveness of Swift, who, whatever his real religion may have been, was, in his malevolent moods, the most vindictive and venomous penman of his century.

T. F. PALMER.

The Inquisition in New Spain.

Of the lore generally known in Mexico, there is a popular tag describing the Inquisition:—

"Un Santo Cristo, dos candeleros.
Un pobre diablo, y dos majaderos."

"One Holy Christ and two candles.
One poor devil and two scoundrels . . ."

Beyond a doubt this description is apocalyptic, for few made openly such slighting statements about the Holy Tribunal of New Spain while it was in active function. Only some of its victims snicker, most of them members of the "cursed sect of Jews," which has for some years been corrupting the country, and these wolves in the guise of lambs mix with the faithful flock, making mischief.

Indeed, it was chiefly on account of the cursed and circumcised sect that the Inquisition declared its services were needed. Other offenders were heretics, bigamists, revolutionary propagandists, blasphemers, rebel priests, imposters, and a great number of witches, of which a celebrated class were "negresses who spoke through their chests." The native heathen were rarely "tampered" with, because it was doubtful whether they had human souls to save. "Soon after the founding of the Tribunal," says a Church historian, "the cells were filled with prisoners. The copious mob did not have room in the dungeons, so that some strong houses were taken, and with great secrecy new jails were planned and built therein. No one knew of them until they were filled . . . obliging the Inquisition to build more, which was done, with such short and easy execution, though not at low cost, that they can better be called fortresses than jails."

Public *autos-da-fé* or "Acts of Faith," when prisoners duly investigated and convicted were handed over to the civil authorities for punishment—prescribed by the Inquisition—were held every ten years, and smaller private Autos every year or two. The Holy Tribunal was founded in Mexico about the year 1550. When New Spain was at its richest, there must have been a great number of circumcised mixing with the faithful flock, for Autos were more frequent, and were recorded as notable among other things because of the number and "depravity" of the processes.

However, the focus of a really brilliant *auto-da-fé*

was not upon the prisoners, they were details necessary to the intricate ceremonious holy-days which theoretically they occasioned. The gravity of the case lay elsewhere. Upon these days the political wheels ground with subtle precision, the vice-regal court and the Church Officials supped and conversed in contrapuntal social elegance; the ladies stepped out on flowered balconies in new and tiny satin shoes, and in the plaza where the circus-like structure for the *auto-da-fé* was being hammered together appeared booths for fresh lemonade and hot fried mouthfuls, and Indian craft displays, prettily hung in carnival fashion with fringes of coloured tissue paper and wreaths. The stadium itself was arranged in sections and decorated according to the rank of the destined occupants. The strata open to the sun, like the cheap sections of modern bull-rings were for the populace, commanded to attend on pain of "fearful curses," coaxed with promise of indulgences, and faintly menaced with the significance of absence as fit matter for investigation by Inquisition agents.

Above the wooden planks of the populace was the vice-regal box hung with richly decorated tapestries. His seat was of black silk embroidered in gold. For his feet there was a cushion of purple velvet. At his right, a small table, richly covered with black and gold, upon which rested the Cross, the book for Mass, and two small bells for signalling.

On one side the chairs of the Inquisitors covered with crimson velvet, with cushions of the same for back and foot. This matter of the seats was a subject severely disputed, and as to the cushions, they were alluded to only with exceeding tact, as in a handbook of instructions for Inquisitors, whose author says: "Under the awning should sit the Viceroy and the Inquisitors in their proper order, the oldest Inquisitor at the left of the least old, and the Viceroy at the right of the oldest, and in between the other Inquisitors, members of the court, and Chief of Guards . . . on French chairs, none of them of velvet, except that of the Viceroy with two cushions as has been stated, and no one else has them, though once an Inquisitor, Moya de Contreras by name, attempted to have a cushion at his feet, being just then Archbishop-elect, and for this he was given permission by the Viceroy—likely to cleanse, it was suspected, himself of certain personal venalities—but it was strongly opposed by his fellow-Inquisitor Bonnilla, and thus he did not secure it and therefore absented himself, excusing this on the grounds of 'illness.'"

The same author gives further information of an Auto site: "In the middle of the Arena, a platform, of different levels for the different grades of prisoners, with a pulpit at one end, an altar, covered with beautifully engraved-silver service, and a niche for the green cross, symbol of the Inquisition." The prisoner's box which faced the pulpit, consisted of standing room with a post on it, and an iron ring to which he was fastened. The handbook advises "cords and gags for the possible use of prisoners who, as sometimes occurs, take some liberty . . . and disturb the reverence and respect due to the occasion." It is not clear for whom he suggests "a coach or retreat privily prepared."

Thus carefully premeditated, the *auto-da-fé* was formerly initiated by the Inquisition's long and exquisitely worded invitation to the Viceroy on parchment, with seals. It was solemnly received, meticulously answered. On one occasion the clerical messenger who bore it having come perhaps a little hurriedly, the Viceroy received him standing, whereas another messenger, a secular army officer who came shortly after was given a chair, and because of this there came about correspondence in which the Inquisition insisted upon its deep hurt and lamented the

slight and insult inflicted upon it in the person of its messenger, who testified in several long epistles how he had been received and delivered his message standing.

Flourish of trumpets and tolling of bells initiated the preliminary parade of the sentenced, on the first morning of the *auto-da-fé*. But the nobles and Inquisition officers lent the real éclat to the procession. Thus the chronicler in 1659 records that the Viceroy rode in the cavalcade dressed in black satin over rose, with gold embroideries and jewelled buttons. The Chief of Guards wore black satin embroidered in silver, and his horse's trappings of the same. In the second parade, on the following day, the Inquisitor was garbed in most magnificent raiment, and wore his tiara, and the nobles all appeared in very rich costumes, making a brilliant assembly. The prisoners also were clothed as befitted their rank. Whereas the "sanbenito" (garment of infamy and disgrace) of a negative impenitent bore flames and demons on a yellow ground and had a hood, that of one to be merely pardoned and flogged was marked with a simple green cross.

The audience that witnessed these parades was large, it included, noble ladies and their attendants on balconies, priests, monks, negroes, mulattos, nuns, Spanish grooms, in short, the whole population, even the not yet recognized wolves were not absent.

The ceremony opened with Mass and the Oath of the Viceroy, who, as representative of the civil authorities swore, "To uphold the authority of the Holy Tribunal, to grant its officials all they are entitled to have, by reason of their august and divine position, to give the Church and its officials the privileges due to them, and that any man condemned by the Tribunal was condemned by him, and that he would obey the orders of the Tribunal and carry out its instructions faithfully, with the aid of Christ and for the glory of God and our Holy Mother the Church. Bells tolled "amen," a mourning for the copious mob of lost souls . . . standing where the seats of the populace ended. Then came the reading of the cases. Most of them were very long, and they were considered slowly, partly in order not to fatigue the court, partly because it was hoped that all were impressed by the occasion, and that some of the accused might confess. Each evening during the Auto days the impenitents were visited in their cells by priests, none of whom could have less than two academic degrees, for they must be prepared to battle in theological discussion with the prisoners in order to drive the demons from their souls. Torture had been the preliminary, and part of the previous mechanism of investigation. Reasoning was the last resort. Up to the moment of lighting the fire, the prisoner was "exhorted to confess and repent." If he did, he would be pardoned, which meant that he, or she, would burn only once.

This is the boon commemorated by the image of "Our Lady of the Pardon," which hangs in the cathedral of Mexico. It was painted by the unhappy Simon Pereins, about whom there is a long dispute as to whether or no he was a Jew. The burden of the contention that he was lies in the nature of the remark for which he was imprisoned. He stated that he preferred to paint the charms of a lady of flesh and blood to the less tangible beauties of a Madonna. On account of his illness, his request to be given palette and brush was granted. After this he refused to admit even the guards who brought food. How he lived and by what light he painted is part of the miracle which was revealed when the day for an *auto-da-fé* came, and the Priests found Pereins in rapture before the image of a lady he had made on the inside of his prison door. He was pardoned and burned, the par-

don was granted on account of the miracle whose agent he had been.

On the day for pardons and burnings, the Inquisition served breakfast to its guests, both noble and impenitent. But, at least in 1659 "none of those who were to be executed partook from the generous repast served in the dungeons." Contrast the social decorum indeed to the deportment of the lady wife of the Viceroy, who by invitation once visited the Tribunal, witnessed a few examinations, made the round of the dungeons, and then, accompanied by her maids of honour and by nobles and Inquisitors, repaired to a chamber which was sumptuously hung with red velvet and decorated with flowers, opening out on a balcony from which she afterwards viewed the procession of the sentenced.

The breakfast cost, in wines alone, a large sum. She remarked that in none of the public entertainments given in her honour had she been so well pleased, nor had she eaten more to her taste. It was generally believed that legions of demons caused the perversity of heretics, especially of the cursed sect of the circumcised.

X.X.

(To be concluded.)

Acid Drops.

Nothing like cheek, and of all varieties Christian cheek is the toughest. In Australia our example has been followed and Churches are free of taxation. But the Footscray Church of Christ (Victoria) has a tennis court, and on this there was a tax of £2 10s. due. So in forwarding the cheque it was pointed out that the Church was not in funds, and would the Council remit the tax. And the Council returned the cheque! That really does take the biscuit.

Reuter's tell of one method of laying ghosts. Two girls were in a farmyard near Lisbon when they saw a ghost who is said to strangle his victims. The girls, instead of behaving in a properly orthodox manner—such as is advised by most Spiritualistic experts when interviewing a ghost, threw some large stones at it, and the ghost is now in hospital with several stitches in his head.

But this is quite wrong. The proper method would have been to have reported the matter to the nearest Spiritualistic organization. Some "psychic experts" would then have been appointed who would have taken the depositions of the two girls, weighed them, counted the animals in the farmyard, noted the colour of the bricks in the farmyard wall, enquired whether there had ever been anyone in that neighbourhood who had done anything wrong, and held some "seances"—a much more impressive word than either "meeting" or "sitting," and then solemnly placed the case on record as a remarkable psychic experience of two ignorant peasant girls. Really, if people are encouraged to go about heaving half-bricks at ghosts we shall soon be ghostless. No properly trained ghost would attend anywhere in such circumstances. Ghosts must be expected to stand on their dignity as well as other folk.

There are few places in contemporary newspapers where greater nonsense is so consistently published as in those features named "Sayings of the Week"; "Points from Speeches," etc. By way of example, and to judge the matter by the best rather than the worst samples, we will mention two from last week's *Observer*. Mr. Reginald Berkeley scores a bull's eye with the following profundity: "Freedom from worry is an attitude towards life—a matter of realizing that this affair of being alive is only part of a great mystery that is beyond and behind life." But how can Mr. Berkeley "realize" this "great mystery"? and if he can, surely it would be better worth publishing than his aphorism

about it. Again, Mrs. A. M. Henderson, is reported as saying, "Rhetoric is a lost art in this country." If she would spend an hour or two in what has been called the People's Forum, near the Marble Arch, not to mention the Law Courts and the House of Commons or the Congress Hall, Clapton, or the City Temple, she will find a good deal more rhetoric than of anything else, and, if she gets tired of it at the first-mentioned resort, she can get relief at the N.S.S. platform there. To do the *Observer* justice we must quote, from Mr. St. John Ervine's autobiographical instalment in the same issue, a sentence which is much more deserving of a place among the sayings of the week, namely: "The world is coming to its senses about child-birth, in spite of the strenuous attempts of celebrate priests to keep it out of its wits, and men think, not with pride, but with shame, of Queen Anne, who bore seventeen infants that were too sickly to survive."

Apologists for Christianity never lack audacity, nor is their a better example of this than the quite common suggestion that the Middle Ages, when Christianity was at the height of its power, prestige and patronage, are not properly described, as they usually are, as the dark ages. So the man in the street refers to them, and, when he is not playing the apologist for religion, Mr. Chesterton backs the man in the street against the expert all the time. But when he is in that position it is quite another story. Then he says something like this: "the chief thing about the dark ages is that they were not dark." Every branch of research has contributed its quota to the indictment of the Christian religion in power, and we note in a recently published history of *Masks, Mimes and Miracles*, by Allardyce Nicholl, in which the author has gone very thoroughly over the whole of the recorded chronicles of these arts that, even so conservative a reviewer as the writer in the *Times Literary Supplement*, that "we must admit that during the Middle Ages dramatic and mimetic art outside the recognized religious plays passes under a cloud which makes its features hard to discern." Mr. Nicholl himself points out the Church made every effort possible to suppress the secular theatre, and adds that "the mime takes the whole of life for his province, and, like nature itself, has naught to do either with morality or religion." Thus, the more the by-ways of knowledge are explored the clearer it becomes that art and literature, like science, have prevailed not by the aid of religion, but despite centuries of repressive legislation and enactment mainly clerical in origin.

From the same journal we cull a moving passage from the obituary notice of the late Sir Hall Caine, who, we are now informed immediately after his death—there is no limit to Methodist necessity—was "as recently as a week before he was stricken down," thinking of helping "the Methodist film campaign"! Sir Hall Caine, looking out from Mount Greeba on the Isle of Man "often gazed upon that scene thinking out his plots; and no doubt his mind went to the Good Shepherd on the hills of Galilee as his ear caught the bleat of the mountain sheep." Comment would be indecent; but quotation is inimitable.

"A Tramping Methodist," a minister, is "Hiking in Wesley's Footsteps" round the shires, and his peregrinations and calls at Methodist churches, chapels, schools, houses, and institutions, recorded in the *Methodist Times*, make anything but lively reading. Last week the hiker was in Gloucester, and taking occasion to visit the old cottages wherein Robert Raikes founded his Sunday schools, notes that "their present condition and occupants seem to show a lack of appreciation for the great interest of these houses both for Gloucester and our Sunday School Unions." Nor was this clerical tramp more fortunate in his experiences at the chapels. At the village of Berkeley was a chapel seating 150, where the members of one family, together with "the organist, another relative, and from fifteen to twenty children form the entire Sunday congregation." But "numerous young men in the district idle away much time in the Square, and cannot be brought into the church," although "there appear to be a few counter-attractions especially

on Sundays; it is just the difficulty of capturing the interest of these fellows!"

Coming to Gloucester City, the tramping parson finds at the Northgate Chapel "a quiet and dull congregation." The chapel seats 1,000, and the congregation consists of about 200 of the better sort," who strike the visitor as being "a little too comfortable." Next he went to a P.S.A. at Lower Barton Street P.M. Chapel, where "a gentleman plays a pianoforte solo, and those present stand to sing an unintelligible prayer." Two hundred and fifty sittings, but the "crowd consists of seventeen elderly people, including the pianist and speaker." The Stroud Road U.M. Church being the next halt, is celebrating an anniversary, but "there are about 200 present leaving room for one hundred more." Well may the "tramping Methodist" say that he had not Wesley's experience of "the troublesome multitudes," of which Wesley said "the mob was considerable, but an honest magistrate, taking the matter in hand, *quickly tamed the beasts of people.*" The italics are ours, and there we will leave this revelation of church attendance among the Methodists.

Dr. Louis Neulsen, European bishop of the U.S.A. Methodist Episcopal Church, has been interviewed by an English religious journal. Speaking of Russia, he says: "I have been five times to Bolshevik Russia, and my services were undisturbed. So far as my own personal observation went, people were free to go to church. I could preach and I had Bibles printed there, though I do not now know what has become of them."

Speaking about the position of his Church in Germany, Dr. Neulsen says:—

Though we are recognized as a State Church, we have no State support, as we had none before the war. There is no Republican hostility, and our people are relieved of any State religious tax . . . As to our people's political sympathies, of course they are loyal to the new Republic. But here you must not let your own experience of Labour or Socialism mislead you about us. The Labour Party is anti-religious. It never had Christian leadership as you had in England—think of your Mr. Henderson, or the Prime Minister, or Mr. Snowden; we have nothing parallel to that. The State Church of Germany drove their Socialists into anti-religion, and so ultimately into revolution. Our Methodists would, of course, like to see a more Christian Republic, and perhaps a more monarchical form of Government like you have in England, yet with full democratic rights and influence—that would be a godsend to us.

In Austria, adds Dr. Neulsen, "there is a fierce fight proceeding between the Church and Socialism, and both are down on Protestantism. We have legal rights here, it is true, but the Roman priesthood makes the lives of our Methodist people a torture . . . I often hear it said, 'It is hell to go to church in a Socialist state.'"

The Bishop of Carlisle laments that it is very hard to teach people reverence in Church. He thinks that lack of reverence may be due to a crouching attitude being adopted instead of kneeling. There may be something in this interpretation of the alleged fact. After all a man who stands up is reminded that he is a man. When crouching there is the suggestion of a leap to an upright position. But when he is kneeling there is the full suggestion of weakness and helplessness, and there is nothing like this that helps to make a man a really good Christian and fit for heaven. It will be remembered that the angels who did dare to stand up in heaven were all kicked out and sent to hell. Shut your eyes, bow the body, stop any kind of critical thinking, these are the three essentials of the genuinely saintly character.

From the Pastoral Address issued by the Wesleyan Conference we learn that what is best in the Puritan has been one of the chief elements in the national greatness.

Lest this should seem incredible, the explanation is given that:—

The true Puritan is not one who is for ever cavilling at the pleasures of others, still less is he the enemy of beauty in art and letters; he is, indeed, a serious person because he knows the infinite value of human life set against the background of God and eternity. He lives . . . as ever in his great Taskmaster's eye.

If "the true Puritan is not one (etc.)," then there must be a deuce of a lot of "untrue" Puritans about. The Puritan, as we have observed him, is a solemn ass who spends most of his leisure hours endeavouring to compel other people to conform to his narrow notions and warped ideas. This reveals him as a colossal egoist. His colossal egoism, his avowal of personal humility, his itch for interfering, and his stupid assumption of being "called" to control the lives and conduct of others, are the infallible signs of the true Puritan. We shall want a lot of convincing that he can possibly have helped towards the national greatness. But it must be so—the Puritan himself declares it!

Dr. Fisher, Warden of New College, Oxford, has stated that "the Church of England is Erastian in its constitution, Calvinistic in its doctrines, and Roman in its ritual." The more fun that is poked at our anomalous established religion the sooner we are likely to get rid of it. A correspondent sends us a rhyme apropos of the recent dust up in the law courts and elsewhere between Dr. Barnes and the Archbishop of Canterbury, over some clergyman and his "living" in the former's diocese. This rhyme, which applies to the parson, needs must also apply to the Bishop, who, as he has admitted, shares the parson's contempt for the mere law:—

"The talk about authority
But where the shoe doth pinch,
This most obedient dutious son
Will not give way an inch;
He is his own authority
On whatever is his whim,
And he's only for the Bishop
When the Bishop is for him."

To come back to Dr. Fisher, we agree with him that (especially in the realm of religion), we have a knack of allowing ourselves to be governed by other people." This is not merely a "knack," but a creed with Christians, who, being so at loggerheads about those who are supposed to govern them, make a poor job of governing themselves.

Fifty Years Ago.

THERE is nothing fools dislike more than having their opinions laughed at. Fools and priests go together in this. "Priests of all persuasions," says Goldsmith, "are enemies to ridicule, because they know it to be a formidable antagonist to fanaticism, and they preach up gravity to conceal their own shallowness and imposture." With such wit is always "wicked" and reason "carnal." The Christian missionary who goes to convert the heathen, however, does not, like the early Christians, admit the reality of Pagan deities, nor does he usually allow how much of worth may be found in Pagan systems. Nor is he always content with preaching Christ and him crucified. If able, he generally tries to use such wit as a not too bountiful Providence may have bestowed upon him in order to make the idols of the heathen appear as ridiculous to them as they are to himself. He follows Elijah, who told the priests of Baal to cry aloud upon their God, as peradventure he was asleep. But when the Freethinker, emancipated from the fetish-worship of the Bible and the superstitious absurdities of Christian dogmas, uses his mother wit in exposing these old wife's fables and fooleries, pious eyes, hands, and noses are raised in holy horror at the audacity of the blaspheming wretch. Verily there must be some difference between the Christian missionary with divine truth on his side and the Freethinker deceived by the father of lies.

The "Freethinker," September 11, 1881.

Sugar Plums.

A summarized report of the Congress of the International Freethought Federation will appear in next week's issue. Mr. Cohen and Mr. McLaren are attending on behalf of the N.S.S., and Mr. C. Bonner and Mr. Pike on behalf of the R.P.A. It is no child's task attending this Conference. The first meeting commenced at 10.30 on September 4, continued in the afternoon, and the day concluded with a public demonstration in the evening. There were speeches by the representatives of each country, Mr. Cohen speaking on behalf of English Freethought. The attendance—in two halls totalled over 6,000—a magnificent display.

It was inspiring to note the procession of young men and young women, carrying a number of banners, through the large hall, and the subsequent dramatic presentation of youth greeting the world conquest of Freethought. There were also a very fine band and choir. The proceedings were well organized, and ran with great smoothness. We are writing this on Saturday morning, in the midst of the proceedings of a committee to consider the formation of an International Information Bureau, on which Mr. McLaren and Mr. Cohen were appointed members.

In both *God and the Universe* and *Materialism Restated*, Mr. Cohen said that the talk popular with journalists, and also, it must be admitted, with certain scientists, to the effect that the new theories of science, particularly the Quantum Theory, had abolished Determinism and strict causality in the world of science, was, in plain words, nonsense. At most it only meant that there were certain discoveries, the precise meaning which could not at the moment be determined, and which appeared to cut across some of our established theories. Uncertainty is never certainty, however extended the meaning of it may be, and it can never become logical basis for an affirmation of knowledge. But in this matter religion has run true to form, and as religious theories have never had any basis other than ignorance, it was not surprising to find the alleged ignorance of science made the basis of religious affirmation.

To all those who have so dwelt upon the abolition of Determinism we offer our profound sympathy. The author of *Quantum Theory* has just published a small, but meaty little book on *The Universe in the Light of Modern Physics*, and he makes short work of those who have been dwelling upon the breakdown of Determinism. He says:—

To-day, indeed there are eminent physicists who . . . are inclined to sacrifice the principle of strict causality in the physical view of the world . . . So far as I can see there is no ground for such a renunciation. For there always remains the possibility that the reason why it is impossible to give a definite answer resides, not in the nature of the theory, but in the manner in which the question is asked. If a question is adequately formulated physically, the most perfect physical theory can give no definite answer, a fact widely known in classical statistics and frequently discussed. For example, if two elastic spheres strike one another in a plane, while their velocities before impact, and the laws of impact are known in all their details, it still remains impossible to state their velocities after impact . . . From this, however, we do not infer that there is no causality governing impact phenomena; what we do say is that certain essential data are missing which are requisite for their complete determination.

This is a complete endorsement of what we have said concerning the significance of the Quantum Theory, and from the author of that theory. But we do not, for a moment expect that it will stop the usual talk about the death of Determinism whenever it suits the upholder of some religious theory to revert to that particular fallacy.

We have often called attention to the boycott that is exercised wherever possible against the *Freethinker* and our publications. Here is a very striking instance. Our agent induced a well-known West End bookseller to display copies of Mr. Cohen's *God and the Universe*. A number of copies were taken on sale or return, and these were sold in about a week. Then the book was withdrawn from the window, and copies were afterwards purchased only when ordered by customers. We have good grounds for believing that a number of the firm's customers complained of the book being exhibited for sale, with the result named. The book-seller was afraid, the customers were bigoted. The best way to reply to such a work, they thought, is to suppress it so far as it can be done.

Fortunately the book has been selling well. The first edition was exhausted within three months of publication, and the second is selling steadily. In addition, the American Book Club has taken it for the "Book of the Month," for August, and there should be a good demand on that side of the Atlantic. But we do not hesitate to say that with a fair show the sales would have been multiplied ten-fold. What we should like to see would be some doughty Christian champion reply to the book. Professor Eddington alone replied to Mr. Cohen's criticism of his work. The others have decided that silence is the better part. They pay Mr. Cohen what John Wesley called a "violent compliment."

A well-attended meeting of Wembley Freethinkers completed all the preliminaries for the formation of a Branch of the National Secular Society in that district. All that is now needed is the official sanction from the Executive.

We continue to receive reports of good work being done by Messrs. J. T. Brighton, and J. Clayton. Freethought came out a very easy first in a debate between Mr. Clayton and a local Christian at Burnley last Sunday. There are excellent prospects for the formation of several new Branches of the N.S.S. if local saints willing to help will introduce themselves at the next meeting.

Our lively Australian contemporary, *The Rationalist*, in the last issue that has reached us, contains a summary of our special Jubilee number, with an appreciation of the work and quality of the production. Its editor, J. S. Langley, is a glutton for work, and as is usual with those who are responsible for a Freethought paper, has all the financial worry attendant upon its maintenance. Trade in Australia is very bad, and that does not make his work easier. But there should be enough Freethinkers in Melbourne to see that at least the financial worries are reduced to a minimum. Freethinkers should recognize their duty in that direction even though they are unable to help in any other.

Mr. G. Whitehead will be in the Manchester district until Friday the 11th. During the first week Christian hooligans gave a display at several meetings, but failed to spoil them. A blow aimed at the Freethought speaker with Christian brutality also failed to land. The best way to curb the rowdy followers of Christ, is for local Freethinkers to support the platform. So long as it is safe to be rowdy, some Christians will not behave decently at Freethought meetings.

Mr. Whitehead will be in Birmingham for a week commencing to-day (Sunday,) when he will speak in the Bull Ring. We understand further announcements will be made at to-day's meetings. From Birmingham Mr. Whitehead will go to Plymouth for a week, and from Plymouth a week will be spent in the Fulham district, which will bring the arrangements with the Executive of the N.S.S. to a close.

Kings, Priests, and Gods.

(Concluded from page 571.)

EARLY conquerors were believed to owe their success to magical skill, powerful guardians, or charms and talismans, which protected and assisted them. The Irish Druids "are represented as maintaining that it is owing to them the sun rises each morning and sets each night" (Standish O'Grady, *Hist. Ireland*, i. 108). In Ireland we learn from the *Senchus Mor*, the chiefs, like the Angakut of the Eskimo, had "power to make fair or foul weather" in the literal sense of the words. The early leaders of European races had the magical virtues of barbarous chiefs. Mr. Lang says (*M. R. and R.*, i. 116): "The children of Odin and Zeus were 'sacred kings.' The Homeric chiefs, like those of the Zulus and the Red men, and of the early Irish and Swedes, exercised an influence over the physical universe. Homer speaks of 'a blameless king, one that fears the gods, and reigns among many men and mighty, and the black earth bears wheat and barley, and the sheep bring forth and fail not, and the sea gives stores of fish, and all out of his good sovereignty.'"

The medicine-man has everywhere the power of metamorphosis. He can assume the shape of all animals and subdue others to the same enchantment. Gautama Buddha during his numerous jatakas or births took the form of numerous animals, and so far were the legends of these transformations from mere myth to his followers that the hair, feathers, and bones of the creatures the great teacher inhabited have been preserved as relics in Buddhist temples.

M. Le Page Renouf, in his *Hibbert Lectures on the Religion of Ancient Egypt* (p. 161), observes: "I must not quit this part of my subject without reference to the belief that the ruling sovereign of Egypt was the living image and vice-regent of the sun-god Ra. He was invested with the attributes of divinity, and that in the earliest times of which we possess monumental evidence."

Menes, who is said to have been the first king of Egypt, was believed to be a god. As with the Thracian god and law-giver, Zalmoxis, whom Herodotus could not determine whether God or man, the early kings of Egypt were merged in divinities. An inscription makes the god Ra acknowledge the paternity of Pharaoh Rameses I.

The Christian father, Arnobius, in his first book, *Adversus Gentes*, says: "We worship one who was born a man. What then? do you worship no one who was born a man? Do you not worship one and another, aye deities, innumerable?" Referring to Christ's ignominious death he mentions that "Pythagoras of Samos was burnt to death in a temple, under an unjust suspicion of aiming at sovereign powers." "Do not ye too, by consecrating shrines to him, honor father Liber, who was torn limb from limb by the Titans? Have you not after his punishment and his death by lightning, Æsculapius, the discoverer of medicines, as the guardian and protector of health, of strength, and of safety? Do you not invoke the great Hercules himself by offerings, by victims, and by kindled frankincense, whom you yourselves allege to have been burnt alive after his punishment, and to have been consumed on the fatal pyres? Do you not, with the unanimous approbation of the Gauls, invoke as a

propitious and as a holy god, in the temples of the Great Mother, that Phrygian Atys who was mangled and deprived of his virility? Father Romulus himself, who was torn in pieces by the hands of a hundred senators, do you not call Quirinus Martius, and do you not honor him with priests and gorgeous couches [this refers to the practice of placing the images of the gods on pillows at feasts], and do you not worship him in most spacious temples; and in addition to all this, do you not affirm that he has ascended into heaven." (*Ante Nicene Christian Library*, pp. 32-33.)

The word "god" is applied to rulers in the Bible. Moses is called a god (Ex. vii. 1), Samuel (1 Sam. xxviii. 13-14), Solomon (Ps. xlv. 1). Judges are called "gods," the sons of the Most High (Ps. lxxxii. 6). Cyrus means the Lord, and is called the Lord anointed (Is. xlv. 1), so Zedekiah is referred to as the Lord Christ or the anointed of Jehovah (Lam. iv. 20). The great monarchs of ancient Egypt, Mexico, Peru, Japan, Chaldea, claimed to be worshipped as gods. So did Alexander the Great and the Roman emperors. Virgil calls Octavius god. Domitian issued orders with the words "The Lord our God commands it." Pope Innocent III. declared that as vicar of Christ he stood midway between God and man. Cardinal du Perron said that as there was only one God in heaven so there ought to be one God only on earth, and in a letter to Clement VIII. says, "I have always revered your beatitude as God on earth."

In China, for a long time past, the deities only attain their divinity through the head of the State. When any saint has answered prayer, given rain, or worked other miracles, a petition is sent by his admirers to Government to acknowledge his claims, and if allowed they are officially acknowledged in the *Pekin Gazette*. Sometimes a man may be canonised or even deified for personal service to the emperor. Thus an emperor of the Ming dynasty, to whom shaving was most painful, was one day attended upon by a person who shaved him with such miraculous ease that a large reward was as once offered to the operator, who then revealed himself as an ancient sage canonised, and demanded admission to the higher order of State divinities. His claims to official apotheosis as the God of Letters were admitted, and the legend explains why he is also the patron Saint of Chinese barbers.

Titles preserve old ideas. Thus we have *Serene* highnesses and majesties, upon whose serenity, luckily, the welfare of the world does not depend, for they sometimes fly in a passion. That old pedant James I. was called "God's vicegerent," and hated Sir Walter Raleigh because he questioned the phrase. His Majesty takes us back to the time when the king was a *magus*, while the clerical "reverend" reminds us that they were once revered. The Greek emperors had for heraldic achievement a cross between four bounding B's, standing for Basileus, Basileon, Basileion, Basileusi, king of kings, reigning over kings. Some were called Panhypersebastos, or "over and above all worshipful and august." "Lord of the whole world" was a frequent title to ancient petty kings. In imperial edicts Roman emperors are styled "Nostra Divinitas," "Nostra Perenitas," "Nostra Eternitas." In the epistles of Symmachus to Theodosius and Valentinus we find the titles "Vestra Eternitas," your eternity, and "Vestrum Numen," your Godhead. The Emperor of China is His Celestial Majesty, Brother of the Sun and Moon. The Sultan of Turkey

as Kalif, is "the shadow of God on earth," and sometimes the shadow of God's ineffable companion, Death. The Pope, whose very name shows that, though a celibate, he is a papa, assumes a triple crown, yet is styled "Your Holiness," and, noblest of all titles, "Servus Servorum." God's Vicar is, however, the more general Papal title, thus preserving the spirit of the Decretal of Boniface VIII, who decreed that the submission of all men living to the Pontiff was necessary to salvation. The triple-crowned tiara means lord of the under world, this world, and the upper world. Butler said:—

"As the Pope that keeps the gate
Of Heaven wears three Crowns of State,
So he that keeps the gates of Hell,
Proud Cerberus, wears three heads as well."

Religious evolution follows the course of social development. The soundest archæology is the study of institutions. The first deity is a mother, as the first object of adoration was and is the mother's breast. The recognition of elders and rulers on earth led to the homage paid to their spirits. From human rule was built up the hierarchy of heaven. When chieftains were established chieftain gods were created, and these gods were at first only tribal. With the federation of tribes under one ruler came subordinate gods under a chief deity. Not till large monarchies were established, the rulers of which claimed to be king of kings and lord of lords, was any claim made for the sole rule of the sovereign of the skies. It was the large empires which paved the way for the so-called universal religions. Everywhere we see that the progress of religion followed that of society.

(Late) J. M. WHEELER.

"The Bible and the Public Schools."

Address delivered before the Rotary Club of New York,
August 6, 1931, Hotel Commodore, 42nd Street and
Lexington Avenue, New York City.

"He who decides a case, though he may decide rightly,
if he has not heard both sides of the question, has not
done justice."

Fair play is only too glibly mentioned to-day without being practised; and tolerance is more observed in the breach than in the performance.

And so when an occasion presents itself where both of these cherished ideals become a reality, our thanks and appreciation are due—and I want the Rotary Club of New York to know how much I appreciate the opportunity they have given me to present our side of the important controversy of "The Bible and the Public Schools."

And if there are men in this audience, who, for the first time, are looking upon a Freethinker, I want to assure them that I have no horns in the back of my head; that I have never been arrested for beating my child, or for deserting my wife, and I even pay my income tax!

I also want at the very beginning of my talk to assure you that anything that I might say this afternoon should not be taken as a reflection upon the personal beliefs of anyone in this audience.

I would not deliberately hurt the feelings of a single individual, and although I would like to explain in detail our philosophy, I shall do my utmost to confine myself strictly to the subject of the afternoon.

However, you have invited me to present the Free-

thinker's point of view on "The Bible and the Public Schools," and it would be hypocritical on my part if I did not speak the truth as I know it.

We are opposed to the reading and the teaching of the Bible in the public schools from both a legal and moral point of view, and although the legal phrases of the case are in the hands of our attorneys, I think we, as laymen, can well appreciate the fundamentals upon which we base our case.

The Constitution of the State of New York, Section 3, Article 1, provides as follows:—

Religious liberty: The free exercise and enjoyment of religious profession and worship, *without discrimination or preference*, shall forever be allowed in this state to all mankind.

When George Washington Butler, that eminent mountaineer representative to the legislature of the State of Tennessee, the gentleman who introduced the notorious anti-evolution bill, made the startling discovery, during the now-famous Scopes' trial, that God in his infinite wisdom did not write the Bible in the English of the King James' version he was terribly perturbed.

If anyone attempted to use some other version of the Bible he would have considered it blasphemous.

He found out, however, to his amazement, that there were not only other versions of the Bible, but that *no two* were alike.

The Catholic version differed from the Protestant version, and both in turn differed from the Hebrew version.

In view of these facts how can *any one particular* version, or in fact *all three* versions be read in the public school, with children of every conceivable religious heritage, without violating both the *spirit* and the *letter* of the provision of the Constitution that I quoted.

Section 4, Article 10, of the Constitution of the State of New York says:—

Neither the State nor any subdivision thereof shall use its property or credit, or any public money, or authorize or permit either to be used directly or indirectly, in aid of maintenance of any school or institution of learning wholly or in part under the control or direction of any religious denomination, or in which any denominational tenet or doctrine is taught.

Can anyone deny that the reading of the Bible, without note or comment, is in effect a denominational tenet and religious exercise?

Can anyone deny that the Bible is a religious book, and its purchase by public money illegal, and a clear violation of this article of the Constitution?

There is a provision in the charter of the City of New York which says that the Bible may be read without note or comment, but specifically mentions that the Board of Education shall not be competent to decide which version shall be read!

Perhaps the great brain of Mr. Tuttle will be able to solve this conundrum.

When the wise founders of this Republic incorporated in the Federal Constitution those provisions known as the Bill of Rights, they did so with the full knowledge and understanding of their importance.

And what was the very first of those amendments? It said that, "Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

Thomas Jefferson was responsible for the Bill of Rights, and if Mr. Tuttle is in this audience, I trust he will include the name of Jefferson among the fanatical secularists that he so eloquently characterized at this meeting two weeks ago:—

When a religion is good, I conceive it will support itself, and when it does not support itself, and God does not take to support it, so that its professors are

obliged to call upon the civil authorities, tis a sign, I apprehend, of its being a bad one.

I want also to make sure that Mr. Tuttle includes Benjamin Franklin, whose words I have just quoted, in his category of fanatical secularists.

The late Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, William Howard Taft, said ". . . religion itself may not be taught in the public schools, or under associations so near to the public schools that they become part of the instruction."

And Ulysses S. Grant, said let us "Resolve that not one dollar of public money shall be appropriated to the support of any sectarian school. Keep the Church and State separate."

Include these two presidents in your list, Mr. Tuttle!

But if Mr. Tuttle insists that the remarks were particularly directed at our organization, then he will have to include in his list of fanatical secularists such men as Rupert Hughes and Clarence Darrow, Sir Arthur Keith and Bertrand Russell, Dr. Henry Smith Williams and Dr. Philip G. Peabody, Ex-Premier Herriot of France and Thomas A. Edison.

And in response to any inquiry from me asking his opinion of Bible reading and Bible teaching in the public schools, Mr. Edison wrote:—

I do not believe that any type of religion should ever be allowed to be introduced into the Public Schools of the United States.

Mr. Tuttle must also include the late Luther Burbank, whose noble character and invaluable contributions to humanity are only too well known.

If these illustrious men who are members of one organization, are fanatical secularists, then I want to tell you gentlemen that I am proud to be President of that organization.

When Dr. A. S. Draper was Commissioner of Education of this State, he laid down this rule, that "Reading of the Bible or repeating the Lord's Prayer is a religious exercise. Religious exercises of any character cannot lawfully be conducted in the public schools."

The laws governing the public schools of this State specifically mention the subjects the child is to be instructed, and Mr. Tuttle knows and the churches know that religion is *not* one of them.

Bible reading in the public schools is religious instruction. It is a violation of the law.

Are the strenuous efforts of the Interfaith Committee and their attorney, Mr. Tuttle, to inject religion into the public schools, an admission on their part that they are unable to make the people adhere voluntarily to their creeds?

Must they have the machinery of the State to assist them in their endeavours to make adherents and supporters of their churches?

Must the public school system be used to bolster up the dwindling congregations of the churches?

And when the churches insist that the machinery of the Government do the work that they are supposed to do, then is it not a public acknowledgment of their failure?

They want the Government to do what they themselves are unable to accomplish. And why?

Because education has left the church lagging miserably behind. The churches insist that an adulterated product is better than a pure one.

We do not.

We believe that education makes for morality and that religion adulterates it with superstition.

When Mr. Tuttle tells you that the Bible in the public school will cure crime, he is suffering from religious hallucinations.

If religion could cure crime we would to-day be

living in a paradise. If what Mr. Tuttle says is true, then the Middle Ages should have been the most moral in the history of Man.

Were they?

Read any authentic history and it will tell you that never in the history of the people of this earth did there exist a more demoralized or more licentious people.

Only a little more than a week ago, there appeared in the New York Press, (*New York Times, Herald-Tribune, July 27, 1931*) the report of Dr. Adelaide T. Case, Professor of Education at Columbia University. In this report of her examination of 1,000 pupils, she expresses her astonishment at "the surprising amount of prejudice and ignorance about religion" among the majority of these children.

She continues: "How can there be any religious tolerance and true understanding when youngsters of nine and ten have such bitter and intolerant ideas of the other religions? Not only do we find a marked misunderstanding between Jew and Christian, but between Catholic and Protestant children as well."

Her reason for this she says: "Too often the fault lies with the parents. It is in their power to mould and colour all a child's beliefs."

It has been our contention for years that the instilling of religious beliefs in the minds of young and immature children intensifies the hatred and bigotry that must inevitably follow such teachings.

And I am glad to see our educators verifying our contention by a scientific analysis of this important phase of child education.

The prejudiced and preconceived notions that children receive from their parents regarding the religion of others is only renewed and stimulated with Bible reading.

If you send your children to school with hatred in their hearts for other children of different religious belief, how can you expect peace and harmony in the world?

Let us begin right. Let us send our children to school with a tolerant attitude towards other children, and with a desire to seek the truth no matter where it leads. If we do that, we can be fairly confident that before long the dawn of brotherhood will break upon the earth.

Let us control the education of our public school children for one generation and I will perform an educational miracle.

I will not subtract a single item from their education that they now receive, but I will eradicate racial and religious prejudice and hatred from their hearts.

Perhaps the most important significant educational test in recent years was detailed in a paper read before the Ninth International Congress of Psychology, held at Yale University, on September 6, 1929, when Professor Pleasant R. Hightower, of Butler University, Indianapolis, Indiana, made the startling report of an examination of more than 3,300 children. The New York Press reported his address with this caption:—

STUDENTS OF BIBLE FOUND LESS HONEST.

Professor Hightower said:—

People have been saying for years that if you give children a knowledge of the Bible they will walk the straight and narrow way. The results show that they will not walk the straight and narrow way. It does indicate very definitely that mere knowledge of the Bible of itself is not sufficient to insure the proper character attitudes.

JOSEPH LEWIS

(To be concluded.)

God's Elect.

SOME wills and epitaphs are amusing, and very often provide much food for thought. If a Christian has been greatly blessed and prospered in his basket and his store, his will may blossom into a pæan of praise to the divine benefactor. Does some cynical Atheist mutter: "sheer egotism!" Awaunt, ribald fellow, and learn by the experience of the favoured child of God the established truth of predestination!

The following is an extract from a will published in a Sunday newspaper of August 16, of a recently deceased Christian picture dealer, who left £25,531:—

"I die without any grudge whatever against Providence, for my life has been richly blessed. In the spirit of love and forgiveness towards everybody I die believing in the merits and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"I thank my Heavenly Father from the depth of my heart for all his goodness and kindness to me; and for the health He bestowed upon me during my life in this world.

"Now I humbly commit my poor soul to His keeping. My last desire and wish is to be in his bosom for ever and ever."

By the way, in the adjoining column of the same newspaper an account is given of an old couple who were swindled by a "charming" boarder, who was a regular attender at Church, and much given to pious quotations—two favourites being: "Remember if you are ever tempted to do anything wrong, there is someone up above who will see you"; and "As ye sow so shall ye reap."

The ways of "Providence" are "wropt in mystery", and we must assume that the old couple deserved the visitation, whereby they lost £5 and several valuables, besides being done out of their account for boarding a pious gentleman described as "a man about twenty-six years of age, clean shaven, with very dark hair." In the description it is also notable that "His nose is larger than the average," and that he is "a fluent speaker, his pet topic being religious themes."

Now, here is a really baffling and perplexing situation. Is this pious young man to be stigmatized as a common or garden thief, or is he, by the inscrutable purpose of Providence, and the doctrine of Predestination, the agent of God to bring punishment upon the heads of his old landlord and landlady? His name is not published, but if we have regard to historical precedent, it may yet be enrolled amongst the saints of God. As Burns put it: "He may sit by David's hip yet." David, the sweet singer of Israel, was tyrant, coward, bully, thief, seducer and murderer; but he is an honoured name in the Church today, because of his "repenting" so abjectly with floods of crocodile tears. Theologians make a great point of regarding Jesus Christ as a descendant of this royal libertine. British Christians who maintained that the Ex-Kaiser was anti-Christ, and the author of the Great War and of unspeakable atrocities; and that he and the Prussian junkers were Atheists (see Hilaire Belloc in 1914) have had it retorted upon them by German Christians that the Kaiser was the most devout of believers and worshippers, and that he was the emissary of the Lord of Hosts, in carrying fire and sword against the Atheistic enemy countries who were encircling the Central Powers. There is no reason for supposing therefore that Wilhelm II will not also in the future be enrolled with David of Israel as a saint. It depends on the voting power.

The pious young boarder has diverted our attention from the testator mentioned in the opening part of this article. The satisfied assurance and certitude of the

latter is a testimony to the power of Christianity in keeping the "dibs" for "the faithful." He reminds us psychologically of Mrs. Chick in *Dombey*, who forgave "poor dear Fanny everything"! The Tired Tims, the Weary Willies, and the other unfortunates who can occasionally afford a bed in a model lodging house, and an occasional cup of coffee and "spotted dog," must be comforted and fortified by the exemplary character who entertains no grudge against Providence, who forgives everybody; fervently thanks his Heavenly Father for permitting him to leave £25,531, and for giving him the health and strength to make and save that sum. The Heavenly Father alone knows what might have become of it if the testator had taken the above-mentioned charming young boarder to his bosom! The testator's sole final ambition is to be in the bosom of the Heavenly Father for ever and ever. Well, *chacun à son gout!* One is reminded of Artemus Ward's description of the home of President Abraham Lincoln invaded by a crowd of "office-seekers," each clamouring for a place in Abraham's "buzzum." As Mr. Ward philosophically observed, if all of them were to get into the President's "buzzum," he would have some "nussin'" to do, which brought a maidenly blush to old Abe's cheek, though he welcomed the showman as his deliverer from a noisy and importunate gang. The Heavenly Father may have occasion to sigh for a similar deliverance as the increasing numbers of his "elect" are admitted to the portals of Paradise! Lincoln could cry "God help me!" But to whom is the poor old Heavenly Father to make a similar appeal? IGNOTUS.

Cant Casuistry and Clerical Cash.

THE financial support of what the Catechism calls "our spiritual pastors and masters" is engaging much attention among religionists of every variety. In *Church Assembly Notes*, published by the Press and Publications Board of that body, the faithful are told that "if voluntary gifts to not increase the Church cannot keep pace with the growth of its work." The "income from endowments is now often quite insufficient for the purposes for which they were originally given." This income, we may add, is in fact used by the Establishment for purposes for which, as to a large part of it, it was never designed, and which must have, in its diversion, caused many a "pious benefactor" to turn in his grave.

This journal also says that "no endowment has been given" (i.e., to the Church of England) "by the State." This lie can be shortly answered. The Ecclesiastical Commissioners, Queen Anne's Bounty and the other holders of religious property, dispense monies which might, and in due course doubtless will be, used by the State for national purposes which would be, in many cases, more consistent with the will of the donors than those for which they are used at present.

In the "compromise" by which the alien Church of England in Wales was finally disestablished, that Church got a good deal more than its just due in the way of revenue—from the Coalition Government of blessed memory. It was not disputed that the essence of the compromise was sacrifice by the State. The revenues of the English Church, if put to productive use (although so "inadequate" for its "growing work"), would help Mr. Snowden and the overburdened taxpayer more than any available alternative funds—if there are any.

When "the offertory" is taken up during the Communion service the parson is directed "to say one or more of these sentences following, as he thinketh most convenient in his discretion." So as the pennies and threepenny bits are tinkling on to the plates passing from pew to pew, the church resounds with such appropriate words as, "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we shall reap your worldly things?" And "Who goeth a warfare at any time at his

own cost? Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not the fruit thereof? Or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock." And finally (though these sentences are as numerous as they are appropriate), this most unctious monition. "While we have time, let us do good unto all men; and *especially unto them that are of the household of faith.*" Notwithstanding this begging it is common knowledge that there are few parsons who would exist on what it produces in the way of L. s. d.

In the Church of Rome the support of the clergy is almost as vital as credulity, and, indeed, it is a moot point whether stinginess to them is not one of the "seven deadly sins." Our pious contemporary, *The Universe*, in its "Enquiry Bureau," answering one P.K. says: "Long-continued and deliberate neglect of the precept to support one's pastors might well amount to a mortal sin; but it is impossible to lay down when such a sin becomes mortal. So much depends upon the circumstances of the individual." (Later, in the same column, and in reply to another questioner No. 2094), our contemporary says "Lies of excuse are still lies, and sinful. When circumstances require it, it is quite possible for a sensible person to think of an evasive answer which will not be a lie. *Most lies are venial sins* (italics ours) but, of course, a lie upon a serious matter, and having serious consequences, *could easily be a mortal sin. But it is impossible to lay down a hard and fast rule in the matter.*" (our italics).

We have not wandered from the theme with which we began, for in the offertory sentences and in the enquiry bureau above mentioned, taken together, we have established that in defending its revenues, as in defending its doctrines, Christianity is as indifferent to truth as it is to every concern of decent human beings in this world out of which it cannot make something for itself and its army of mercenaries.

A.H.

Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

"RELIGION."

SIR,—The main criticism which Medicus levels against me is, I take it, contained in the sentence: "If we are to progress in the quality and accuracy of our thinking, we must ask, what Mr. Fraser does not ask, namely, what *ought* religion to mean." But since Medicus does not answer the question himself, I assume that he does not know what the answer *is* or *ought to be*. Indeed, I have a suspicion that he does not even know what the question itself *means* or *ought to mean*.

What *ought* any word to mean? I have always thought that what a word *ought* to mean is what it *does* mean. For if a word *ought not* to mean what it *does* mean, then it *does not* mean what it *ought* to mean. And since my article answered the question "What *does* religion mean?" it answered, at the same time, the question "What *ought* religion to mean?"

If this is not clear to Medicus, perhaps he will be so kind as to explain the difference, as he sees it, between what a word *does* mean and what it *ought* to mean. But if the true reason for his complaint is that he is dissatisfied with my definition of what religion *does* mean, then his remedy lies in suggesting a better one. If it does not prove to be more generally and correctly applicable than mine, then his criticism misses its mark.

C. S. FRASER.

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SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

LONDON.

OUTDOOR.

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

PINSBURY PARK N.S.S.—11.15, Mr. R. H. Rosetti—A Lecture.

FULHAM AND CHELSEA BRANCH N.S.S. (corner of Shorrolds Road, North End Road): Saturday, at 7.30, Mr. F. Day and Mr. E. Bryant. *Freethinker* and other literature on sale.

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.

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

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. Cock Pond, Clapham Old Town, Sunday at 7.30, A Lecture; Wednesday, September 16, at 8.0, at Rushcroft Road, near Brixton Town Hall, Mr. L. Ebury; Friday, September 18, at Liverpool Street, Camberwell Gate, at 8.0, Mr. L. Ebury.

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

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 12.0, Mr. B. A. Le Maine; 3.30, Messrs. C. 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 LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Ravenscourt Park, Hammersmith): 3.30, Messrs. Bryant and C. Tuson.

INDOOR.

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.): 11.0, John Katz, B.A.—"The Power of Death."

COUNTRY.

OUTDOOR.

BRIGHTON BRANCH N.S.S.—Saturday evening, at 8.0, inside the Level—Messrs. de Lacy and J. T. Byrne.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N.S.S.—Mr. G. Whitehead will speak in the Bull Ring on Sunday, September 13. Details for remainder of week will be announced at the meeting.

BLACKBURN MARKET.—Thursday, September 17, at 7.30—Mr. J. Clayton.

CRAWSHAWBOOTH.—Tuesday, September 15, at 7.30—Mr. J. Clayton.

DARLINGTON (Market Steps).—Sunday, September 13, at 7.0, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

DURHAM (Market Place)—Tuesday, September 15, at 8.0, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY.—Ramble to Pot of Gartness. Meet corner of Cathedral Street and Dundas Street, 11 a.m. prompt. Members and friends invited.

HIGHAM.—Monday, September 14, at 7.15—Mr. J. Clayton.

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, September 16, at 8.0, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

NEWCASTLE BRANCH N.S.S.—Sunday, September 13, at 7.0, in Bigg Market, Mr. J. C. Keast.

PRESTON.—Sunday, September 13, at 3.0 and 7.0—Mr. J. Clayton.

WINGATE.—Saturday, September 12, at 7.0, a Debate—"Is There a Life After Death?" *Affir.*: Rev. H. Dixon, Wesleyan Church; *Neg.*: Mr. J. T. Brighton.

INDOOR.

PERTH BRANCH N.S.S. (Independent Labour Party Hall, Union Lane): 2.30, Full meeting of members requested to arrange Winter Programme and other important business.

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