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

Views and Opinions.

Science and Religion.

At a meeting of the British Association during the course of a discussion on the new theories of the universe and their bearing on religion, Bishop Barnes, who has gained for himself a reputation of an advanced thinker, said that what he disliked about the new theories was that they left no room for Judea. By that, I take it, he meant that the findings of science did not fit in with Christian teaching. That the apt reply would be that they never did. Christianity is essentially pre-scientific, and in its history anti-scientific. But the objection raised by Bishop Barnes was eminently Christian, and it lies at the root of the bitter opposition that has been shown to scientific teachings. Criticism of scientific theories is both proper and useful, but from the time of Roger Bacon down to our own day the kind of opposition to which science and scientists have been subjected owes its existence entirely to religious prejudice. Bacon was imprisoned, Galileo was forced to recant, Copernicus was afraid to publish his theory, Buffon was made to recant his teaching on geology, evolution was opposed, scientific materialism was denounced, not because those responsible for these things had any reasonable objection to them, or had any evidence against them, but simply and entirely because they were felt to be opposed to Christian teaching. And the time and energy wasted in the contest between science and religion, the cultivation of habits of stupid opposition to scientific teaching, the small degree to which a genuinely scientific temper is current among the people, are indications of the tremendous obstruction religion has offered to intellectual and ultimately to ethical and social progress. So far, Bishop Barnes showed that in spite of his reputation as a man of advanced views he is advanced only in relation to a very backward section of the community. He still remains at heart a theologian. And worse than that could not be said of

any man. The objection of Dayton to evolution was that it left no room for Judea.

* * *

Under New Management.

Two or three of the religious papers evidently felt that Bishop Barnes was going too far, for they thought that all that was needed was a readjustment of Christian doctrine to established scientific teaching. There is really nothing new in this kind of writing. It is a method that has been growing in favour during the past hundred years, and reminds one of the notice one sometimes sees stuck outside a business house, "This establishment is now under entirely new management." The inference is that the old management left a deal to be desired, but the new one promises an improvement. Like the tradesman, the apologetic Christian admits that trade has been very bad, and like the tradesman the theologian hastens to explain that this is because the public was not being served with the goods it wanted. So all that these attempts to readjust theology to modern thought mean is that the theological store has been overhauled, and if people do not see what they desire, if they will only ask for it, it will be provided. That is the real meaning of the endeavours to increase trade by sing-songs in churches, cinema displays, and a Christian preaching that is chiefly remarkable for leaving Christianity out altogether. Unfortunately for the clergy many of the old customers have transferred their patronage elsewhere, and having got used to another class of goods are about as likely to revisit the stores they have forsaken as civilization is likely to give up the use of iron and return to the stone implements of primitive man.

* * *

Making the Best of It.

What the compromisers call readjustments of Christian doctrine to scientific teaching are really so many disguised compliments to Freethought. For in every case those "advances" have had to be forced upon the Christian world and have been accepted only after the hardest fighting. It is not the clergy who discovered the falsity of historic Christian teaching. The most progressive of them say quite plainly that their reason for advocating a modification of Christian teaching is that people are not content with it as it is. That is substantially the reason given by Bishop Barnes himself, who has openly admitted that it was only when he found himself in a position where he could vent some of his own heresy that he did so. With the general body of the clergy it is not a question of what is true, but what is safe or profitable. The clergy warn each other that if the new generation is not made conversant with some of the truth concerning Christianity it may reject Christianity altogether. Some of the truth must be told, and there is a world of difference

between the truth as told by the scientific unbeliever and the watered-down version as given by the wide-awake parson. "Gentlemen," they say, "science is abroad and criticism is active. We have tried to crush the enemy and failed. We have tried ignoring the enemy and failed. So the wisest policy is to take the bull by the horns, pose as impartial and scientific enquirers, and by making a small concession here and there, save the situation. Let us be as honest as we must be, and that may prove more profitable than obstinate persistence in detected error." So does many a criminal see the error of his ways when before the judge, and promise to readjust his practice to the extent of running less risk of being found out.

* * *

Why Bother ?

Why is there any necessity at all for revising Christian teachings? Is such a thing honestly possible? You can revise scientific teaching because that is put forward as the best that can be given with the knowledge at our disposal, and with the proviso that further knowledge may involve a revision. But how does one revise a revelation from God Almighty? God Almighty goes to enormous trouble to give man a revelation of the truth. That revelation is accepted and forced upon the people for generations. Then along comes someone who, without any assistance from God, discovers things that are at direct variance with this "revelation." In that case the only honest course would seem to be to dismiss the revelation altogether as untrue and useless. Instead of that our apologetic theologians proceed to revise God's statement of what he did and why he did it, and inform both him and the people what he really ought to have said. On the same principle one might prove that both Ptolemy and Copernicus were right. It is true that one said the sun went round the earth, while the other said that the earth went round the sun, but both of them said that one thing went round another thing, and which went round the other was a mere matter of detail, of no importance whatever.

But if, as the new apologists admit, we have to learn the truth from secular sociology and secular science in general, what gain is there in having a watered-down version of these truths served up by the Christian clergy as advanced religious thought? Why not use the money spent on the maintenance of our army of parsons on the encouragement of scientific research and on teachers of science? As things stand the only people who are vitally interested in this reinterpretation of Christian beliefs are the clergy. Their existence as an order is absolutely dependent upon the public looking to them as being necessary to the well-being of society, and to retain this status they must dress up their teachings in a religious form. The laymen who take part in this business are, when honest, simply working for the benefit of their "spiritual masters."

* * *

A Hopeless Game.

Fortunately all these attempts at reconciling primitive superstitions with modern science, are doomed to ultimate failure. The most that can be done is to postpone the ending. To gain this respite theologians are to-day ready to do almost anything. As Bertrand Russell says in his just issued *The Scientific Outlook*, "In order to meet the assaults of Atheistic reason (theology) has, during the last hundred years, aimed more and more at appealing to sentiment. It has tried to catch men in their more relaxed moods; and from a straight-jacket it has become a dressing-gown. In our day, only the fundamentalists and a

few of the more learned Catholic theologians maintain the old respectable intellectual tradition. . . . Theologians have grown grateful for small mercies, and they do not much care what sort of God the man of science gives them so long as he gives them one at all."

But this game cannot keep on for ever. No one can say what are the limits of man's knowledge, but there are, fortunately, limits to his folly. For in the business of life folly ranks on the debit side of the ledger. We must pay for our blunders, and in the end the most stupid of men ask themselves whether it is wise to persist in a course that so clearly spells waste and failure. The "new Management" sign may be conspicuously displayed, but there is only the old stock to offer, and there are the old methods employed. The gap between faith and fact, between theory and practice grows steadily larger, the number of those who perceive these dissonances grows greater, and the pressure of the herd becomes transferred from the conservative to the more radical side. "The man in the street" transfers the allegiance he once gave to the church to science, and even though this be at first as unreasoning in the latter case as it was in the former, it is yet an allegiance which encourages the exercise of independent judgment, and places high value upon the function of criticism. Science actually brings the corrective for any misstatement it may make, while theology can only canonize its errors. The dice of life are thus loaded on the side of progress, the pressure of social existence is exerted against the weight of religion. To recur to our metaphor, the firm's premises may be redecorated and the stock labelled new, but the custom is drifting in another direction. Tastes are altering and other commodities are in demand. And so the famous old firm finds itself left with a stock of unsaleable goods, watching its former patrons hasten to a more up-to-date establishment.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

The Last of the Prophets.

"Power has been hitherto occupied in no employment but in keeping down wisdom."—Landor

Glendower :

"At my nativity

The front of heaven was full of fiery shapes,
Of burning cressets; and at my birth,
The frame and huge foundations of the earth
Shaked like a coward."

Hotspur :

"Why so it would have done

At the same season, if your mother's cat had
But kittened, though yourself had ne'er been born."

Shakespeare: "Henry IV."

THOMAS MOORE, the poet, was nearly choked with indignation on being asked by a young lady at dinner how he got his wonderful forecasts for his almanac. Yet the fact remains that "Old Moore," the prophet, counts far more readers to-day than the author of "Lalla Rookh," a poem much admired on publication, and for which the poet received ten thousand pounds.

It used to be said that prophecy either found a man mad, or left him so, but a bright exception must be made in the case of "Old Moore," the most genial of soothsayers, whose almanac is known throughout the English-speaking world. Not long since, there rose up, in an idle week, the old newspaper dispute over the names of the twenty greatest men alive and famous. Reputations tossed, rose and fell. They were odd folks who were not quite certain of David Lloyd George. Over the merits of Benito Mussolini and the

Bishop of London there were unkind comparisons; but none of the numerous correspondents ever questioned the right of "Old Moore" to be considered the last, brightest, and breeziest of the prophets.

His is a fame that flourishes wherever the English language is spoken, and his enormous reputation is in itself a most ironic comment on our boasted civilization. He has shown to hundreds of thousands his sober visions of the future, and he has most carefully observed the secret of anonymity. As for his readers, this prophet serves them well. His manly utterances set them right at the moment when a sensational press bids them "get the wind up." His words, too, have a soothing effect when folks are jumpy over this matter of £ s. d., or when revivalists scream that the poor old world is going to "the demnition bow-wows."

"Old Moore" should know something concerning the voices of the stars and planetary influence, for, if rumour is correct, he has been in active communion with them for well over two thousand years. At least one of the editions of his famous almanac claims to be in its 235th year, whilst another is said to have a circulation of over a million copies annually. It is true that the name of "Francis Moore, physician," is not in the current Medical Directory, but, probably, on account of his great age and many infirmities, he is on the retired list. He ought to have seen many ups and downs during his lengthy and interesting career, having started in the prophetic business prior to the reign of good Queen Anne.

"Old Moore's Almanac" for the coming year suggests that "the voices of the stars" are pianissimo and not fortissimo. The prophet's principal hieroglyphic for 1932 is not unlike the East India Docks in the piping times of peace. The background is composed of ships of the mercantile marine, whilst in the foreground a sample officer and seaman, dressed in their best, stand as sentinels guarding a large-size lady, wearing a fireman's helmet, and holding a toast-fork. This figure represents Britannia, also in her Sunday clothes, and the accompanying letterpress assures us that all this naval splendour is "hastening the day when all men will be joined together in one great brotherhood for the betterment of the race."

There are three dozen smaller cartoons, thoughtfully supplied for the twelve months of the coming year. They provide considerable food for reflection and amplify and supplement the large picture. From the letterpress we learn that "death will be busy" in the month of January, and a valuable scientific discovery will be made in February. March is to be memorable for a great railway accident, whilst a "particularly brutal murder" sullies the record of April. In July "large heath fires" will be reported. The most important news that the acute housing shortage will be overcome brightens the dull days of October, and the year finishes with the prophet expressing fervent hopes for a merry Christmas to all his readers.

Of more interest to the general reader is the forecast that business at holiday resorts will be excellent in August. Lest this unexpected good fortune should induce too much optimism, we hasten to remind the prophet's clients that the summer of 1931 was either lost, stolen, or strayed.

That prophets are essential in a modern civilization no right-thinking prophet will venture to deny. And it seems to us that no soothsayer, ancient or modern, could function in a more broad-minded manner than "Old Moore" himself. After all, if prophets exist at all, they might as well radiate good advice as to vitiate the atmosphere with lurid accounts of awful things that never happen. A prophet, reduced to his lowest terms, is just a business man, like the Archbishop of Patagonia, or a manufacturer of dynamite.

There are such crowds of people out walking in the streets who are celebrities or notoriety, that it is a real pleasure and a great novelty to find a prophet whose features are veiled. In this Bagdad of ours no Haroun al Raschid can venture abroad undistinguished. "Old Moore's" fame however, is still safe, although he does not wear the gee-gaws and fineries of the Bishop of London, and his portrait is not reproduced in the cinemas and newspapers as often as that of a Royal baby. It is as well that the last of the prophets should be a modest man, and give comforting and cautious anticipations. His predecessors breathed fire and slaughter over a credulous world in troublous times. "Old Moore" has more kindness in his disposition. The transformation is as startling as that of Caliban turning into Prospero, but the latter appearance is more welcome than the earlier, and forms a fitting climax to a very questionable chapter of human history.

MIMNERMUS.

What Is Reality?

THE difficulty which so many people have in answering this question is not due to any occult or metaphysical quality which it may be supposed to possess. It is simply due to their ignorance of the nature of language. For only by means of language can such questions as this be put and, in the absence of physical demonstration, it is only by the same means that they can be answered. Unless we have made a study of the functions and inherent limitations of the only instrument available to us for dealing with such questions, there is little likelihood of our being able to solve a problem which is essentially a verbal one.

Now because we can ask "What is *N*?"—where *N* represents any noun in the English language—it does not follow that *N* is something or anything. For we can ask, "What is nothing?" Most people, however, are so given to hypostatization that when they ask "What is *N*?" they imply the words "*N* must be something in itself—what is this thing?" And if the person addressed interprets the question in this sense, he has already fallen into a logical trap from which escape is almost impossible. For a noun does not necessarily refer to a "thing in itself" which can be isolated from other things for purposes of analysis. It is in many cases merely a short-speech substitute for other words or phrases.

A propos of the hypostatic fallacy it is worthy of note that philosophers seldom, if ever, put forward questions like "What is Length?" or "What is Weight?" as problems meet for elucidation. Yet there is no fundamental difference between such questions as these and the question "What is Reality?" The probable reason for their reticence is that, whereas "Length" and "Weight" are used more consistently in connexion with material objects, "Reality" is used indiscriminately in connexion with things concrete, abstract, imaginary and even non-existent. This slipshod terminology has resulted in giving the word an ambiguity of meaning which, to the linguistically untrained, provides just that atmosphere of mystery so suitable to philosophic contemplation. It seems almost unkind to deprive philosophers of their pet puzzles, but the interests of clear speech and accurate thinking must claim prior consideration.

The mystery of all abstract terms does not lie in the words themselves, but in the mental vagueness of those who use them and in their inability to locate the source of the confusion arising from this vagueness. Once we realize the rule that abstract words cannot

be explained solely in terms of other abstractions, we are a long step towards solving most of the so-called "problems" of philosophy and metaphysics.

What, then, is "reality"? It is, to begin with, an abstract noun in the English language. And, as such, it is nothing more nor less than an abbreviation or condensation for linguistic convenience; it serves to facilitate verbal reference much in the same way as algebraic signs serve to shorten numerical calculations. It does not refer to anything which can be produced for verification by the senses. We cannot get hold of a lump of "reality" for examination, nor can we extract an essence of "reality" for analysis. If we had to explain "reality" to anyone ignorant of our language we would be compelled to do so by reference to things which we call "real."

This brings us to the second point. The noun "reality" is formed from the adjective "real," which is a verbal label given to a number of different things. If there were nothing to which we applied the label "real," the abstract term "reality" would not be found in our language. Thus what we mean by "reality" depends upon the totality of things which each of us labels "real." And unless we are clear as to our reasons for giving this label to certain things and not to others, we cannot possibly have any clear meaning for "reality" and its opposite "unreality."

The third point to note is that the things we English people label "real" are so labelled by us (a) because we have been taught to do so and (b) because we have chosen to do so. It is not because certain things exist which bear some unmistakable sign showing that they should be labelled. For if things did bear such a sign, then it would be as patent to foreigners as to us, and the word "real" would be universal. But since the accurate use of verbal labels forms no part of any educational curriculum, and by reason of the varying circumstances in which each of us acquires his mother-tongue, it follows inevitably that the totality of things to which we apply the label "real" varies for each individual. This completely accounts for the different meanings given to the same word by different persons, as well as for the indiscriminate use of one word in different senses.

A simple illustration should serve to make this clear. Let us suppose that it occurred to some earnest, though linguistically untrained, philosopher to propound the problem "What is Sweetness?" After delving deeply into that welter of ambiguity popularly known as "the nature of things," he might emerge with the remarkable discovery that, since we commonly speak of the "sweetness" of such diverse things as children, pictures, characters, sugar, etc., the question is impossible to answer with any degree of conclusiveness. Whereupon he might write several volumes, and finally conclude that "Sweetness" is some sort of quality, relation, essence, property or what not, which is inherent in or emergent from entities both material and immaterial, and which evokes agreeable sensations, feelings, emotions, etc., etc., etc. At the end of which nobody would be any wiser than before as to what "Sweetness" is and everybody would be duly impressed with the profundity of our philosopher's erudition.

Of course the probability is that, in the case of this particular abstraction, some utterly mundane critic would butt in and show that, except in reference to sugar and similar things which could be subjected to the taste, the word was not being used *literally* but *metaphorically*. In other words he would show that there was no problem to solve provided that we define words precisely and use them carefully and accurately. And this criticism is exactly true of the words "real," "unreal," "reality," and "unreality."

If we define the word "real" by saying that it can only be used literally (and therefore accurately) to label such things as can be consciously perceived and verified by the senses, then any other use of the word becomes metaphorical and, for that reason, cannot be indulged in when it is desired to arrive at logical conclusions. At the same time we provide the abstract term "reality" with a definition which precludes any serious ambiguity. So anything which can be labelled "real" according to the above definition is said to "have reality," and anything which cannot be so labelled is said to "have no reality"; while "a reality" is short for "a thing to which the label 'real,' as defined, can be properly applied"; and "reality" is simply a linguistic convenience whose meaning depends on the meaning of the adjective "real."

In conclusion it should be noted that, unless precise definition of terms is strictly adhered to in all logical discussions, there is no hope of arriving at any sort of conclusion which is likely to be helpful or decisive. Thus if we agree to the definition of "real" as given above, and then subsequently talk of the "reality" of an idea or an illusion, without recognizing the latter use as metaphorical, we are using a slipshod and inaccurate terminology which will inevitably lead to confusion of thought. For by so doing the distinction between "real," "imaginary," and "unreal" disappears and language becomes nonsense. If we do not agree to the definition as given above, we should provide some other equally unambiguous definition before attempting to explain what we mean by "reality." We have no right to discuss the "reality" of anything unless we are sufficiently clear in our own minds to be able to explain to others exactly what we mean by the word "real." Vague definition of terms may be the joy of all philosophic and metaphysical speculation, but it is fatal to intelligent discussion.

C. S. FRASER.

The Book Shop.

BOOKSHOPS are still open, and little boys are already anticipating November the fifth by blowing away their pennies utterly regardless of Philip drunk or sober. The *Daily Express* has apparently wiped out the Co-operative Movement of 6,000,000 members for it is now engaged in putting a huge linseed poultice on the trouble caused by the usurers' mass attack on the human race. That paper, together with others has sprinkled its columns with the banker's jargon, which is not understood even by the users of it. It is almost like a hedge-schoolmaster's lecture in dog Latin to a deaf charwoman. The Churches as usual, are doing nothing, or, if they do, it is to be on the side of the angels, and call for a day of prayer. The man in the street is mystified by advice to spend less, to spend moderately, to be assured that he is better off with less, to be cheerful, to "steady boys steady"—for the simple fact that the gaff is blown on one of the greatest mysteries of the world is too much to comprehend, but time is on his side this round—the last. There is a special jargon for the high priests of heaven; there is a special jargon for the high priests of earth; one is supposed to be understood by shutting the eyes and kneeling, and the other is accomplished by looking at the air-balloons—or noughts on the sums flung about by speakers who ask their secretaries what they said a few minutes previously. But the Book Shop is still open, and your pardon for this divagation; it will be granted when I explain, that I did not think that I should live to see the day when so many men would know who were the individuals who controlled the very life blood of society, and accepted no responsibility for the consequences.

Many years ago, I copied in my Note Book the following lines:—

"Oh thou art so impatient of thy birth!
As in her blind hood gropes the daffodil,
As in the pale flower leaps the rebellious fruit.
Lie still beneath this most quietest heart,
For thou a calmer pillow shalt not know
Upon this side of sunset."

The strange beauty of the lines, the wealth of meaning in few words, the grasp of life by the writer, made me want to make them my own. And possession made them a prisoner in leaves dated 1923. There is Schopenhauer and Shakespeare in this picture, and the sweet sad music of humanity. They were memorable lines, and, as the mystic has it, what belongs to you will come to you, I found them in a thin volume of verse entitled *The Cockpit of Idols*, by Muriel Stuart. (Methuen, 3s. 6d.) The poem from which the above lines are taken is entitled "The Bastard"; it is the soliloquy of a mother to her unborn child, a railing at the inhumanity of the world which is Christian. The depth and loveliness of this almost perfect poem, is, in my opinion, marred by resentment, and resentment is bad and enervating both physiologically and psychologically. This is cumbersome language, and may be made to dance, if I transpose it by saying that hatred will make one ill, whilst its opposite gives health. There are many other equally good poems in the volume, all showing mastery of the poet's craft. The best may yet to be from Miss Muriel Stuart, and her skilful touch may produce, in the study of opposites, something approximating to a mean, that finds the world of human beings neither wholly good nor wholly bad. For all Pascal's pessimistic examples, Voltaire could find their opposites, and if we cannot teach mankind, we must bear with it. Resentment, no—we would rather look on a quiet picture such as Miss Stuart gives us in "Common Fires":—

"To-day the bee no bell of honey misses,
The birds are nesting where the bracken lies,
Green, tranquil, deep, quiet as dreams or kisses
On weary lips and eyes."

Even Matthew Arnold, whose thoughts in poetry are sometimes as heavy as lead, but none the less true, can bask in the warm sunshine of what I call, an appreciation of opposites, and few would recognize the saturnine Matthew in the following lines from "Consolation":—

"Time, so complained of,
Who to no one man
Shows partiality,
Brings round to all men
Some undimmed hours."

In January of this year, Dr. Alfred Adler visited England and delivered a series of lectures in London on Individual Psychology. Dr. Hilda Weber had notes of a case of a woman patient, and at one of the lectures, these notes were handed to Dr. Adler, who made an extempore commentary on them. The notes and Dr. Adler's remarks have now been published by C. W. Daniel, price 2s., with the title *The Case of Mrs. A.* (The Diagnosis of a Life Style). If our daily papers will not rise to the level of present-day humanity by giving more than a misleading notice of the affairs of life other than murders, propaganda, and horse-racing, then Mr. C. W. Daniel will step into the breach, and all lovers of philosophy who have the interests of the human race at heart, will thank him for this publication. A casual reading of this pamphlet found gleams of light in it for self-improvement. A steadier reading the second time convinced me that it was underpinned with common sense, whilst being devoid of the eternal jargon of experts that disheartens many readers. The Editor's Foreword has this definition of Individual Psychology: "the name given to a mode of thought, and examination of the human mind, devised by Dr. Adler, and developed by him, his friends and pupils, during the last twenty-five years." Later on, this definition is put in quarantine as follows: "It is concerned with the Individual alone, with the Unity, the Whole, and not with the component parts into which the Individual may be resolved, at the expense of losing his individuality, by ceasing to be that which he now is." The blessed trinity in Individual Psychology is how to behave to others—how to be useful in work—and how to confer with a

person of the other sex. The Postscript describes the happy recovery of "Mrs. A," and readers will perhaps find some of their own troubles in those of the subject, in a more or less degree of development. Moreover, I feel sure that the price asked for the pamphlet is more than returned in the easy and very human comments of Dr. Adler, whom I term a Secular Shepherd. But that may be because I prefer the ethics of the Consulting Room to those of any Church.

Whoever Vanoc II in the *Referee* may be, his writings stand out in that paper which does not lack talent in its other writers. Mr. D. B. Wyndham Lewis, who prepares "Mustard and Cress," makes it of gross vegetables instead of that delightful produce, pungent, fresh, and appetising. He seems to be too clever and produces his paragraphs with a turnip slicer. Vanoc II had an excellent article on the futility of speed in the issue September 13. The world may yet bite the dust of common sense (Shades of Paddy!) and, speaking of speed experts, he states:—

Yet their deeds, judged by any reasonable human ethic, are empty of significance. They travel at miraculous speeds; they create breath-taking records; they challenge death. And at the end of it all they are no wiser, in any significant sense, than when they began.

We wish the new *Referee* every success; there is room for a good Sunday paper, and the butterflies of theatre-land who take us to Utopia deserve a champion. We can live without them—but what an existence!

C-DE-B.

Out of the Mouths of Babes and Sucklings . . .

It is a commonplace of apologetics that children are "naturally" religious; that from the earliest years of childhood the inborn "religious instinct" turns the youthful mind towards God. In Victorian days one of the most popular portrayals of family life showed a little girl kneeling with clasped hands at her mother's knee, lisping about Jesus and his lambs.

As a kindergarten teacher I have had a better opportunity than most of finding out how completely and wickedly false this notion is. When first I was compelled to take "Scripture," and teach things I knew to be false, I was amused at the naive reactions of the child mind to the absurdities of religion.

The fresh, unspoilt faculties have not yet learned the secret of belief, of shutting one's minds' eye when confronted with impossible conclusions, and of deceitfully reasoning round the truth; so the boy of five applies the same criteria to Christianity as he does to poetical matter of everyday life, to "real" things, and cannot understand the horror and mirth his innocent remarks create. When told that God created life by breathing into the dust, one little girl enquired very reasonably: "But didn't the dust all blow away?"

But when I grew a little in experience, my amusement turned to horror at the way in which the nascent reasoning powers of the child are warped and crippled by the reception which greets the first fruits of his reasoning. The child follows his thoughts to their logical conclusion, without thought as to whether the result is "reverent." A young mother of my acquaintance told her intelligent four-year-old all about God and his omniscience. He listened wide-eyed and wondering, but believed it all implicitly because his mother told him. The next day he overheard his mother exclaim: "I wish I knew whether it will be fine next Sunday"; the little boy at once suggested helpfully: "Then why don't you go and ask God—he knows everything." He was soundly scolded for his pains. Can it be wondered that when the child finds its first attempts at logic thwarted and condemned, it ceases to think things out for itself and comes to rely more and more on what it is told? The damage which is done in this way to the sensitive young mind is incalculable, for it is just when the child is being most intelligent, and learning to use the highest and noblest power of man—independent thought—that, indeed, which raises the civilized man above the savage,

and the savage above the beast, that its rebuke and discouragement is greatest. That which should soar unfettered is weighed down with chains before it leaves the ground.

What could be more admirable than the reasoning of another member of my class, during a lesson on "Creation" last week. I had just explained that God made Adam a perfect man, when this bright boy exclaimed: "But he couldn't; Adam would have to be a baby first." Yet the aim of Christian education is to stifle his reasoning power, and teach him to accept what he is told without thinking.

AGIS.

Villanelle.

"The Cherubim know most; the Seraphim love most."

THE ancient Hebrew legends tell
This story of the Seraphim:
"A thousand years they wept in hell."

The Cherubim did most excel
In learning, like the Sanhedrim,
The ancient Hebrew legends tell.

God did the Seraphim expel
From Heaven, so runs the Hebrew hymn;
A thousand years they wept in hell.

Not with proud Lucifer they fell,
But æons long, long after Him,*
The ancient Hebrew legends tell.

They headlong fell, they fell pell-mell;
They say not why, these legends dim,
A thousand years they wept in hell.

But that is why they love so well,
More than the learned Cherubim:
A thousand years they wept in hell,
The ancient Hebrew legends tell.

BAYARD SIMMONS.

* To the Devil his due—and capitals.

A Thought for the Week.

Now that times are so hard, money so scarce and the need for more trade so urgent, it is a patriotic duty for everyone to buy all they want on credit. In this way they will stimulate trade and conserve money. All accounts when due should be met with promissory notes.

Lucianus.

Acid Drops.

Christianity is not in the constitution of the United States, and unlike us, it has never set up a State Church. But America is overwhelmingly Christian in numbers, and also in frames of mind. So it has passed a law that any one who does not believe in war, and who says he will not go to war when the government of the day orders him to do so shall be deprived of the rights of citizenship. That is quite proper because there has not been a war for the past thousand years that God has not ordered, or sanctioned, and in which the Christians engaged on both sides have not been convinced that God was with them. If people believe in Christianity they should live up to it.

Mr. Haslam, M.P., declares that the village inn is not the scene of brawling drunkenness which some temperance advocates believe. And he might have added that it is the village church which seems nowadays to be

specializing in "brawling," the incitation being spiritual, not spirituous. If brawling occurs in a pub, this is often cited as an argument in favour of suppressing the pubs altogether. By a parity of reasoning one might advocate suppressing the churches.

An item in a newspaper runs thus: "Arthur Dowling, described as a human derelict, was at Mortlake sentenced to one month's hard labour for begging." This happens, mark you, in a country where parsons are permitted to beg millions of pounds annually for food, clothing and shelter. And they do so in the name of a Master who lived on charity and who glorified poverty. But if an ordinary citizen attempts to get money for the same necessities he is awarded—one month's hard labour. We presume this is one of the signs that the country is still Christian in practice.

Speaking about Disarmament, a well-known preacher said that the difficulty arose from the fact that the great nations are unable to trust each other; they have so often gone back on their word that confidence has gone. Quite so. As regards the cause of the mistrust, it is hardly a testimonial to the noble influence of the Christian religion where the European nations are concerned. One must remember that these nations have been thoroughly Christianized for centuries—yet they have not had, and apparently still do not have, a proper appreciation of what "honour" means, and of keeping faith in regard to any undertaking or agreement.

It would have been strange if the Faraday celebrations had been concluded without an attempt to exploit that great man in the interests of Christianity. There is hardly a religious, and not many secular journals that have not lent themselves to this "stunt." What are the facts? Faraday was a man of science. He was also a Christian. Even the Dictionary of National Biography, which is not prejudiced in favour of Freethinking, points out that he did not believe that man could by searching find out God, and that he kept his science and religion entirely apart. Faraday was, indeed, an elder of the Glasite or Sandemanian sect. It practised the *oculum pacis*, thought the casting of lots a sacred act, and had the ceremonial washing of feet and a periodical *agape*. Faraday would have been the last to attribute his scientific attainments to his observance of these practices or to his belief in the tenets which gave rise to them. But no great man's memory, and no centenary or celebration is safe from the maul of necessitous Christian apologists. Finally, he confessed that if he reasoned about his religion he would not have believed it.

Less than a century ago the problem of Church and State seemed almost "practical politics," as expedient policies are called. At that time the Establishment was unitedly hostile, and religious opposition counted for more votes than it does now. Disestablishment was therefore left alone by the "progressive" politicians and has been even until these latter days. To-day it may become practical politics because no small part of the clergy and laity of the Church of England, and all the dissenters want it, albeit for the wrong reason. (We do not mention Freethinkers for no politician is concerned with what they want.) We observe, however, that his Lordship of Durham, and other clerical advocates of disestablishment, or prophets of its inevitability of expedience, are strangely silent upon the intimate and inseparable question of disendowment. Now, having regard to the need for economy in the national expenditure, disendowment may well be of much greater interest to the public than disestablishment. The moment it is suggested that the Church should be relieved of some of its wealth, or pelf, there is a great to-do about "spoliation and robbery." As we intend in the near future to deal with the real facts about the revenues of the Establish-

ment, we will content ourselves at the moment with one or two for the reader to be going on with.

The greater part of the endowments of the Established Church in this country consist of what are in fact tithes, or rent charges upon land and the fruits thereof. The Tithe Act of 1836, and successive measures of commutation, all make it plain that the tithe is, as even the late Lord Phillimore once admitted, a tax for the maintenance of the clergy. These revenues, accordingly, are in law separated from the rest of property for religious purposes. Public law, civil and ecclesiastical, and nothing else, has made them available, and they did not, as to the bulk, originate, as it is suggested they did, in private benevolence and liberality. We will quote one Clause from a relevant Act as a sample of many to confirm these statements. 27 Henry VIII. c. 20. An Act for the Payment of Tithes. (Clause 4):—

(4) Provided always and be it enacted by authority aforesaid that this Act for the recovery of tithes or anything therein contained shall take force and effect, but only until such time as the King's highness and such other thirty-two persons which his highness shall name and appoint for the making and establishing of such laws as his highness shall affirm and ratify to be called the ecclesiastical laws of the Church of England, and after the said laws so ratified and confirmed as is aforesaid that then the said tithes to be paid to every ecclesiastical person according to such laws, and none otherwise. (Italics ours.)

After this the less we hear about the sacred, not to say the divine right, of the Church to its revenues, the better.

It is a recurrent affectation of Christian apologists to attribute to new discoveries in science a contrary effect from that which in fact they have on the foundations of their faith. Thus in the time of Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, "honest doubt" was, as he himself said, a thing "of more faith than half the creeds." But, in so far as they had any effect upon opinion, the Victorians, like Mrs. Humphrey Ward in her *Robert Elsmere*, and Dean Farrer in his *Eternal Hope*, drove home the truth that orthodoxy was already on the defensive, and that neither ecclesiastical censure nor hell-fire were as impressive or effective as formerly. Since then from time to time Materialism has been supposed to have been abandoned each time some new advance in knowledge has, in fact, knocked one more nail into the coffin of belief.

A good example of this exploitation of discovery by Christians is the pretence that modern archaeological research has made good the historicity of the Old Testament which had suffered so badly from textual and historical critics. A new work by Professor Garstang entitled *The Foundations of Bible History* (Constable) deals in particular with the books and period of Joshua and Judges. Because Dr. Garstang says that his prolonged study has led him to the conclusion that not only were these records "founded on fact, but they must have been derived from earlier writings, almost contemporary with the events described," it is at once suggested that the truth of the Old Testament is established. But if the historical accuracy of the Old Testament were established—and how can that be done when it is admitted that the Fathers of Old Testament history, Abraham and Moses, were myths—that would not have made it more credible as a divine revelation, but only have fixed its human origin and proper period firmly upon it.

Professor Garstang deals with the story of the dividing of the waters of Jordan so that the Israelites "passed over on dry ground," and, so far from his treatment of this incident witnessing to its miraculous character, he most explicitly says that it is not necessary to adopt a supernatural explanation of it because the river is even now sometimes blocked by landslides, and "in recent

times several living witnesses have crossed and recrossed it on foot." It is the simple truth that every branch of science which has been brought to bear upon the Bible has added to our knowledge of what the books contained in it actually are, and made it impossible for any truthful person to assert, as Christians still do, that they are what they most obviously are not, namely, a divine revelation.

It is thrilling to learn that the Bible Society dislodged nearly 490 tons of sacred paper from its headquarters. It got rid of twelve million Bibles or parts of the Scriptures last year. Meanwhile, there are no signs that this gigantic effort has improved business in the churches and chapels. Perhaps the Bible Society doesn't pray hard enough, or may be God is getting tired of the ancient formulas. How about calling in a few advertising experts to devise some really effective prayers for persuading God to help?

The question of emphasizing the duty of reading religious books in this age of light reading is one that cannot be exaggerated. So says the Wesleyan book steward, Dr. Alfred Sharp. What he really means is—if parsons are to survive, a great effort must be made to induce people to read pious books. Naturally, he doesn't put it that way. One of the tricks of the priestly profession is persuading the faithful that anything which is helpful to the priest is a religious "duty" of great importance.

The Rev. Dr. Frank Ballard is perturbed at the ceaseless propaganda of Rome. He says:—

... Rome is steadily, ceaselessly, insidiously working day and night, by means of five district societies definitely pledged to the conversion of England. How far they are succeeding can be estimated from the fact that recently the wireless evening service, which the B.B.C. broadcast to millions throughout this British Protestant country, was a Romish service from Plymouth Cathedral, without any alternative for the millions to whom "Hail Mary!" is sheer idolatry, and the rest of the service a contradiction of Christian truth.

One gathers that our true-blue Protestant friends would almost tolerate a broadcast Romish service if only there were an alternative Protestant service broadcast also. How the various propagandists of the religion of Peace and Brotherhood and Goodwill do love one another, to be sure!

What is curious is that a religion with all these beautiful attributes should inspire the belief among the adherents of the Protestant section of it that the teachings of the Roman section is sinister and harmful—and vice versa. What is also curious is that this belief, so firmly held by both sections, is completely justified! Be this as it may, we notice that neither the followers of the "Hail Mary!" sect nor those of the "Blow Mary!" sect exhibit any concern about the lack of any alternative item to the broadcast religious service—an alternative which would be appreciated by the large majority of wireless listeners. We notice also that this absence of consideration for others, this failure to appreciate the needs of others, this pious selfishness, is characteristic of the adherents of the Christian religion—a religion which claims to inculcate unselfishness. We shall therefore be pardoned for suspecting the value of that religion in regard to teaching the world how to be unselfish.

From a review of a book or religious essays by the Rev. Prof. Henry Bett we learn that in his essay on "Sentimentality," the professor refers to the moralizing of religious papers on the supposed fact that because "Abide with me" was sung with great gusto at a Football Final, there is therefore a great deal of religion in the hearts of people.

The Professor's comment is:—

The incident seems to me rather disquieting than otherwise, for it falls into line with a good deal else which suggests that a great many people substitute for real religious conviction and a really religious life a mere sentiment of religiosity.

For our part, we doubt whether there is even a "mere sentiment of religiosity" behind the hymn-singing incident. Possibly the members of a mob at a football match may have, owing to early religious instruction, a vague notion that singing a hymn confers, somehow or other, a beneficial effect on the singer. But then they sing with equal gusto the latest music-hall ditty, and probably experience exactly the same kind of mental exhilaration therefrom. Still, we hope the religious papers will continue their funny habit of jumping at comforting conclusions. They add to the small total of gaiety in a drab world.

Mr. Hugh Martin, managing director of the publishing department of the Student Christian Movement, and who has assisted the organization of the Religious Book Week, told a reverend interviewer that the circulation of religious books is "our common and joint interest." He added that there had not been a single refusal from the religious journals nor the clergy and ministers of the country to the organiser's request for help. How remarkable! Mr. Martin regretfully admits that many booksellers say they cannot sell religious books—nobody wants them. But he has found some who can sell them. And he declares that he doubts if there ever was so widespread and keen interest in religion as now. "The B.B.C. religious services are notoriously popular." Also, "there are hundreds and thousands of people who seldom or never go to church, who are keenly interested in many questions of religion and morals and critical questions bearing on the conduct of life. More people are asking for light and guidance on the problems of right living than we think." Mr. Martin regards such people as potential buyers of religious books. We may add that they are also potential readers of Freethought publications. That they are outside the churches, largely, suggests that religious guidance does not satisfy them, and that they are willing to investigate other philosophies of life. That is a sound reason why they should have the Secular philosophy brought to their notice. What Mr. Martin said about such people suggests, we think, a line of approach for Freethought propagandists. If it can be elicited that a man is interested in "morals and critical questions bearing on the conduct of life," there is then an opportunity to suggest that Freethought literature offers some instruction on such matters.

"Beachcomber," in the *Daily Express*, makes some excellent suggestions to the Churches to enable them to become popular. They are not what might be called reverent or in keeping with the spirit of newspapers when they open the flood-gates of righteous indignation following the lead of such ecclesiastical Napoleons as Lord Brentford. In fact, Beachcomber's suggestions are not even sneezes of the reason, but we reproduce them in case they catch the eye of any theological Barnum:—

Failing that ("Bowls") what about flood-lighting on the first Thursday of every month? Or prizes for the first six to be seated in their pews? Or the gift of a fountain-pen to every one who attended regularly for a year? Or a free ride on the Whirly-Whirly during the summer months?

The Bishop of Chichester is full of sympathy for the poor agriculturist who is called upon to pay tithes, but "What of the incumbent with a small income who suffers thereby," he asks. We suggest that the conundrum be best resolved by asking, "Which would you sooner have, a prayer for fine weather or a jolly fine cabbage?"

In a new Encyclical the Pope makes an appeal for the "honest, willing workmen, who are reduced to idleness, and their families to extreme poverty." Roman

stock is very low at present, even in the countries where it has been top dog, and students of history will not be taken in by this attitude of an organization that has had its chance and failed.

The *Daily Sketch* says that "Interest in 'sex' nowadays is certainly overdone. But with many of the young it is an almost academic interest, which is to be preferred to the morbid interest bred of the prudery of an older day." For our part, we are inclined to believe that the "almost academic interest" mentioned is not so widespread as our contemporary would suggest. Nor is the "prudery of an older day" anywhere near extinct. The churches and chapels are still breeding it wholesale—and hence the morbid interest in "sex" is still pretty common. It would be better to say that to-day there is a far more wholesome view of sex current among the young than has ever been before during the Christian era. And for this improvement the Christian religion has had nothing whatever to do. On the contrary, it has delayed the improvement and is still delaying further progress in the same direction.

A man inside a certain profession should have some insight into the men of that profession. Therefore, when the Rev. A. E. Whitham, presumably speaking about the Wesleyan ministry, writes thus we listen with respectful attention:—

Many are labouring to fill the sanctuaries of our land who have not found the buildings to be sanctuaries for themselves; many are striving to bring more under the sound of the Gospel who are too busy ushering folk in to hear for themselves the music in their own hearts, spending their time announcing values they have not tested and the blessings they have not received. It might be well for many of us to cease talking of others or in thinking of them—the man in the street, the stranger in the gallery crowd, or the chowd at all—and direct our own steadfast gaze at the altar . . . The world at this moment does not want ministering hands or hurrying feet all the machinery and activity of would-be saviours; it wants God-possessed men and women who have ceased acting . . .

So when we accuse many of the parsons of not believing in what they teach, nor practising it, let it be remembered that we are not the only one who says so.

A strike has taken place at Woodstock Church in Oxfordshire, and only six of the forty members of the choir took their places on Sunday, October 4. There is no pleasure in carping criticism, but one can at least ask where is the brotherly love that is the sole possession of Christianity. If the incident had taken place in connexion with a Freethought function it would have had a prominent place in the daily papers, but as it is, the record is found tucked away with American Markets and Kerb Stock quotations. Hallelujah.

Fifty Years Ago.

DECEIVING priests of God's swine—slaughtering souls,
Whose swindling system tricks the world to-day,
Roll with the tide of time your vagaries on,
Through many changes to a sure decay;
Could ye but see, deceived, deceiving fools—
The crime and bloodshed from your teaching sprung,
You might well mourn that e'er ye were its tools,
And lent his godship's scheme the lying tongue.
Ah! dead apostles of a tyrant creed,
Slow dies the octopus ye left behind.
But men have risen, inspired with freedom's need,
To cut the fetters from the searching mind;
Truth moves apace, and soon the Ghost's weak son
Must go the way the older Gods have gone.

The "Freethinker," October 16, 1881.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

FREETHINKER ENDOWMENT TRUST.—(Mrs.) Margaret Taylor, 5s.

FOR use in advertising the *Freethinker*. R. Dodd, £1.

A. LESSON.—We trust you will realize all, and more, of your ambitions in the service of Freethought. You are only one of a multitude who have been prevented by their religious training from knowing earlier about the world of Freethought.

D. MATHEWS (Johannesburg).—Thanks for report of the trial. Nothing seems to convince the natural spook-hunter, and we have no doubt that in spite of the exposure of yet another spirit photographer the game will continue. The report will be very useful.

R. DODD.—Very pleased to hear from you again, and to have your appreciation of our recent statement on the relation of our movement to political parties. One has to keep a level head in such matters and to act with justice to all concerned. Your enclosure, as you will see, is duly acknowledged.

J. A. DAVIES.—Much obliged for paper.

H.T.—A capital letter, in spite of the cuts. The dishonesty of these parsons who claim scientific men as Christians because they profess belief in some nebulousity they call "Reality," is equalled by the timidity of so many scientists who feel they must throw out some kind of a sop to religion. The pity of it all!

"SKEPTIC."—Articles appear from time to time in the *Freethinker* dealing with the teachings of Jesus, and will appear in the future. In the near future we intend publishing a very powerful pamphlet by the late G. W. Foote, *Will Christ Save Us?* This will meet your point.

K. T. BROCKLEHURST.—Thanks for cutting. As you suggest, it will be useful for reference later.

S. MOSLEY.—As you see, we keep pegging away, and, we believe, not without good results. Pleased to hear from you after so many years absence in the "wild."

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

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When the services of the National Secular Society in connexion with Secular Burial Services are required, all communications should be addressed to the Secretary, Mr.

R. H. Rosetti, giving as long notice as possible.

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

Orders for literature should be sent to the Business Manager of the Pioneer Press, 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4, and not to the Editor.

The "*Freethinker*" will be forwarded direct from the publishing office at the following rates (Home and Abroad):—

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

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

All Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to "The Pioneer Press," and crossed "Midland Bank, Ltd., Clerkenwell Branch."

Sugar Plums.

To-day (October 18) Mr. Cohen lectures at 3.0 and 6.30 in the Hulme Town Hall, Stretford Road, Manchester. It is easy to reach the building from any part of Manchester, and the usual good gathering is anticipated. The subjects will be, afternoon, "Secularism," evening, "The Disease that Kills Religion."

The burst of fine weather and electionitis were together responsible, we expect, for Mr. Cohen's meetings at Plymouth being smaller than usual. But both meetings were very earnest, and obviously interesting. We hope that Plymouth Freethinkers will work hard to see that the rest of the course is well attended. The Branch has an attractive programme. Next Sunday (October 25) Mr. Cohen visits Leicester.

At the Study Circle on Monday there was a good attendance and the subject, "The Materialistic Conception of History," gave use to an animated discussion. Next Monday, at 8.0, Mrs. H. Grant will open a discussion on "Citizenship."

Arrangements for the formation of a Branch of the N.S.S. in the Bournemouth District are nearly complete, the response to our recent note having been very good. Saints in the area wishing to be numbered among the Founders should communicate at once with 36 Victoria Park Road, Bournemouth.

Birmingham saints are reminded that the local Branch will open its indoor session to-day (Sunday), when Mr. R. H. Rosetti will lecture in the Bristol Street Council Schools, at 7.0 p.m., on "Do We Need Religion?" A Freethought lecture provides a happy escape from the atmosphere of the present topsyturvy election campaign, and we hope the local Freethinkers will take full advantage of the situation.

Mr. J. T. Brighton again reports trouble in Durham, and as usual the local Christian bigots are responsible. Beaten in discussion a gang of Catholic hooligans waylaid the speaker and an aged companion of seventy years of age. At a dark spot the old man was felled with a cowardly blow and badly bruised. Cowardly brutality on behalf of Jesus is a time-honoured Christian weapon, and the only way to check it is for Freethinkers present to quietly indicate that the speaker is not without friends. We would like Freethinker readers in the district to prevent this kind of thing occurring again by being present. The man assaulted, Mr. Birtley, is well known to us, and he has our sympathy.

Mr. J. Clayton continues to take the message of Freethought to outlying districts in Lancashire, and has been fortunate in securing an occasional minister of religion to help show the shocking stuff Christianity is made of, and the primitive mentality of its professional champions.

The New Branch of the N.S.S. at Birkenhead had an enthusiastic send-off for its winter programme. In spite of political meetings the hall was well filled, and Mr. R. H. Rosetti's lecture was very attentively followed, and full opportunity was taken of question time. The Branch officials have youth and energy on their side and the prospects are encouraging. To-day (Sunday) Mr. E. E. Stafford, President of the Liverpool Branch N.S.S., will be the speaker. We are pleased to note Mr. Stafford gave an excellent address to a large audience at the Transport Hall, Liverpool, last Sunday.

WHEN PRAYERS AVAIL.

Old Remus was asked if, in his experience, prayer was ever answered, and he replied: Well, sah, some pra'ers is ansud and some isn't—" pends on wa't you axes for; once it was mighty hard scratchin fo' de called bredden, an' I 'bserved dat w'enebber I pway de Lo'd to send one o' Marse Peyton's fat turkeys fo' de ole man, dare was no notice took ob de partition; but we'en I pway dat he would sen' de ole man fo' de turkey, de matter was 'tended to befo sun of nex mornin, dead sartin.

Bret Harte.

Religion's Supports.

DURING a long period the Churches have been forced into saying and doing things which proclaim aloud the low state into which they have fallen in the popular regard. For the last three centuries Rationalism and Freethought have been gnawing away the coasts of superstition and supernaturalism, and the erosion, long ignored, has become so obvious as to cause alarm.

There has been a succession of publications during the last hundred years, the burden of which has been this admission. These constitute, without intending it, a history of the decline of religion. They have been written to tell the household of faith how necessary it is to gird up their loins and wrestle with the Lord for a revival and for help against the invading foe, proposing at the same time sundry convulsive expedients for answering the prayer themselves, willy-nilly.

Some of these expedients are attempts to apply Christian principles to the ordinary social needs of men, but they are not distinctive Christian institutions, being a tardy recognition of the claims of human society which Freethinking sociologists first made prominent. In fact, the best of these innovations have nothing religious about them except the name, and have been forced upon the unwilling Churches by dire necessity. Others, having as object the capture of the young, more fittingly belong to the War Office than to the Church which has been so conspicuously pretentious in the cause of peace—when there has been no war to bless. A more characteristic creation of the Church, and of which considerable use has been made, is the travelling evangelist, a person, generally, whose mental obtuseness qualifies him to preach the soul-saving truths which the accredited minister, who was called by God for the purpose, has not the courage to preach.

But, with all these expedients, there is no sign of the revival, except in the imagination of those whose interests lie in fostering its expectation. If, as some of them say, religion is looking up, it is because it is lying on its back, sickly and moribund, awaiting the hour when it must pass away as other superstitions have done before. Its dying condition is the theme which converts conference after conference into a perfect love-feast of tearful remonstrance and holy vituperation, during which the mutual forbearance of the Christian brotherhood is strained to the snapping point as the blame is apportioned to one another. The evangelicals blame the modernists, the modernists the evangelicals; the parson blames the laity and the laity retaliates that the parson is at fault. So it goes on until, but for a few words sobbed in prayer, the conference would end in an unseemly quarrel. Indeed, the prayer is not always effective.

Nevertheless, the Christian Church remains, an arrogant challenge to human freedom and defiant obstacle to human progress. Whenever the rights of the people collide with its views, its leaders swarm, like blowflies around a piece of meat, and, with an effrontery out of all proportion to their numbers, poke their sanctimonious noses into other people's affairs. The factors contributing to the continuance of this dangerous anachronism do not spring from any merit it possesses, nor from the so-called divine mission of which its priest like to boast.

One is ministerial dishonesty. The Church has been beaten back by science again and again, making casuistic compromises at every step; it has been forced to abandon or refine dogmas, the denial of which, in times past, led to torture and the stake; the truth of its Bible account of creation, the foundation of the

whole system of its doctrine, has been shattered by geological and ethnological research; but how many of its ministers have the honesty to admit the plain inference that Christianity, as a vehicle of truth, is a monstrous imposture? They so fear the awakened intelligence of the people that they stoop to all kinds of dishonest subterfuges rather than disturb their superstitious beliefs by such an admission. It has been said that only fools persevere in their error. But what are they who persevere in disseminating it because they live in it, or who, by silence, allow their dupes to continue in it? Where honesty is esteemed, there can be but one name for them. A clerical writer in a religious weekly recently said:—

A leading Solicitor in the Midlands, who occupies the highest honorary position that is available for a Solicitor outside London, said to me, "You men (I was then an Anglican Vicar) treat your solemn ordination vows in such a way, that if a man swore a solemn affidavit in a law-court, and treated it in the same way that you treat your solemn ordination vows, he would be incarcerated for contempt of court without option of a fine."

The same writer said that a friend of his, who was a Vicar in the Church of England, told him that at his ordination he was instructed by his Bishop how he could take the oath about the Thirty-nine Articles making it mean something absolutely different from what it said.

Similar deceitful mental reservation is practised among Nonconformist ministers. It runs in the blood, a family complaint, inherited from those pious progenitors who foisted on the world, as a divine revelation, a compilation of writings ascribed to authors who never saw them, and the confusion and absurdities of which have defied a host of learned theologians who have devoted their lives to their exposition, with the vain result that we have a bewildering number of contending sects, each claiming to possess the only true interpretation.

Another is the favour bestowed upon it by our ruling powers.

In the dark ages, the external defences of orthodoxy were supported by the secular arm which, at the bid of the Church, stretched its enemies on the rack and burned them at the stake; the connexion of Church and State still preserves those defences, as far as they can be said to be preserved; and by the same powers are Christian doctrines imposed on the people to this day. Why this alliance with the ruling powers? Professor Bury, in his *History of Freedom of Thought*, reminds us that at a time when unbelief was common among the ruling classes, "the view was firmly held that religion was necessary for the populace" and "was regarded as a valuable instrument to keep the poor in order." That is the secret of the alliance. The ruling classes themselves may be ignorant of the merest urdiments of religion, and may have no other use for the Bible than to furnish names for their horses and dogs, but they will insist that Bible-teaching shall be compulsory in the schools of the poor. Some wise man has said: "Only Christianity stands between civilization and the jungle." It is true, and there is little hope of the jungle ever being civilized while Christianity with its mummeries stands in the way.

The ruling powers have made it possible for the Church for so long to hold its terrors over the people, and to dope them with promises of mansions in the skies. Under the shelter of the laws, it has been allowed to declare, unchallenged, from every pulpit, teachings which are an outrage on common sense; and, now that congregations are dwindling, under the same shield the Churches, hoping to render their nauseating doctrines the more acceptable by their

greater diffusion, have secured a monopoly of the Sunday programme of the B.B.C., thus robbing the subscribing public. In this way they think they serve the cause of religion. It may well prove a false move. Already the Babel of religious deliverances is a matter of ridicule to those who formerly had no idea of the childishness of it all.

Our Municipal Authorities, too, often show a desire to be considered "on the Lord's side," and frequently render themselves ridiculous by their pusillanimous and week-kneed subservience to the Churches' demands. The Press also lends its aid. On the principle that all is good that brings grist to the mill, our newspapers publish much that must be an anathema to the Christian Church, but they soothe its injured susceptibilities by carefully chosen articles on quasi-religious subjects, or by a weekly sermonette full of comfort and simplicity, while it rigidly excludes from its columns anything which might damage religion in the eyes of the people.

Thus is a decadent Christianity being supported. As a house, whose foundations have been undermined, its walls seamed with cracks, its windows twisted out of shape, its doors sunk below the level of the road, is sometimes kept standing by means of stays and cramps, a grotesque and ludicrous landmark, so the Christian Church, shaken and weakened, is supported by these props, an incongruous survival of barbarous superstition: and as the occupiers of the house sometimes stay on, in spite of the ominous signs, coming and going like cavedwellers of a prehistoric past, so do the priests endeavour to cajole the people into living in religious bondage rather than as free and rational human beings. But their cajolery becomes increasingly ineffective and vain. The people's eyes are opened, and they have no respect for those who have exercised authority over them and have stood in the way of their enlightenment. Nor have they respect for the obscene, self-contradictory, and barbarous collection of writings which is the fetish of their enslavers. No longer will they be fed with a warmed-up hash of mouldy superstitions, nor calmly bear with the barriers to their freedom raised by the purveyors of those superstitions.

EL LIBERTO.

Substance and Behaviour.

FOR the purpose for which they were used by Mole-schott and Büchner "matter" and "force" (Kraft und Stoff) might now well be replaced by "substance" and "behaviour." Everything results from the play of dynamic substance. In its behaviour are born all phenomena. Substance, to use Santayana's felicitous expression, is "the natural parent of all scattered empirical facts." Substance is ultimate, unanalysable, irreducible, primary, self-existent, basic, given; *i.e.*, "pure being," the datum of existence and the subject for metaphysics; denied by none save Gorgias. It is the simple of which all phenomena are compounded.

"By substance," says Spinoza, "I mean that which is in itself, that of which a conception can be made independently of any other conception." "Science," says Thomson in his outline, looks for the "one primordial substance from which all the varying forms have been built up."

Substance is excited, changeful; and science also looks for laws which will enable us to understand the manner of its change. In the light of modern physics, substance may even be conceived as electric. Is substance "matter"? Only the metaphysical Materialist says so. The emergent Materialist is more

cautious, asserts that substance is unintelligent like matter, and he leaves its physical quality to science.

"Matter" is only a term for a general way in which substance appeals to us from the external world. It is a name for a class of facts; one of the categories of existence. "Mind" is a similar general term for another class of facts, and the same applies to "life." "In itself" none of these terms has any added meaning.

"Table," "chair," etc., are names covering the inferences from various groups of sense-data. They are more concrete ways in which substance behaves; all having characteristics in common, which entitle them to be grouped together in the category "matter." "Will," "habit," "idea," etc., are other particular facts begat by substance; and, for convenience we include them in the category "mind"; they are likewise particulars in a category. We note other relationships; and specify them as "space," "time," "gravitation," etc., as the need occurs.

The behaviour of substance at various levels of complexity is studied *e.g.*, by physics, chemistry, biology, and psychology. These sciences, or rather branches of science, aim at establishing laws which will afford us a mental picture of the manner in which substance behaves.

Substance, then, is not the same thing as matter or as mind. He who says that substance is mind, or mind-eject, is a Mentalist or Idealist. He who asserts that it is hard "matter" and nothing else is a metaphysical Materialist; thus differing from the Materialist. I would prefer the more explanatory terms Neo-Materialist or Emergent Materialist. The latter affirms, not that substance is all matter, but that substance must behave as matter before it can behave as life or mind.

There is, however, more to be said for the metaphysical Materialist than for the metaphysical Idealist. Those events which appeal to us most readily are undoubtedly those partaking in the series constituting material objects; that is, material events, *e.g.*, those connoting "table," and naturally we are led to suppose that every event must be a material event; and so to the conclusion that only matter exists. The New Realism, with its theories of "compresence" and "overlapping," suggests a solution. Events can belong to more than one series. For instance, events in one context give matter; in another, mind. One event can be a member of two series (say "cortex" and "volition"); and thus at the same time be both cerebral and mental—compresent to the two series, and psycho-physical. There is no reason, either, why two eventual series—of whatever order—should not overlap. Those events concerned in the overlapping will belong, moreover, to two series; and, theoretically any one event may belong to any number of physical, physico-biological, psycho-physical, etc., series.

An event is to be regarded as the unit of the behaviour of substance; and there seems to be no antagonism between Monism and a Jamesian Pluralism. Existence may be conceived either as one substance (Monism), or as an unlimited number of *connected* events (Pluralism). That is the view taken in Russell's Neutral Monism; and, in which ever of the two ways we consider substance, we are denying that there are two, three, or five (or suchlike) different kinds of substances. For metaphysical purposes (general description) substance may be conceived as monistic; for scientific purposes (analysis) as radically pluralistic; being mentally broken up into units (events). To facilitate this separation, the mind conceives a further category—space-time—and, in mathematics, the (non-existent) abstraction from this is infinity. An event is spatiotemporal; the realm of its activity is its spatiotemporal field or continuum.

Now, what is the nature of this substance, manifesting itself in series of events? It is not "material," "mental," etc.; for such adjectives would merely categorise it as one of its own forms. One of the earliest Greek philosophers said that substance was water. Clearly, he was wrong. Water is not self-existent, irreducible. It can be analysed into H. and O. Substance must be the lowest denominator of science. What is it? Let us look at its phenomena and see which of them approximates to our ideal of self-existence. No mind without life, no life without matter, no matter without atoms, no atoms without electrons and protons, no electrons or protons without electricity. Is substance electric then; and are electric charges the only entities that exist?

Let us leave the answer to science. Science will give a suitable noun to self-existence. Meanwhile metaphysics can proceed. Metaphysics—the science of pure being—must supply adjectives. It is language striving to comprehend the nature and activities of substance. Its function is to find adjectives applicable to the nature of substance, *after consulting science to see how substance behaves*. The adjective must await the verb. What does substance do? How does it behave? What adjectives will it then merit? And so we can arrive at a metaphysics based on science. Physics supplies the noun, general science the verbs, and metaphysics (or metempirics) the adjectives. Physics may discard one noun after another, but the other two can nevertheless go ahead. The *what* of the metaphysician (or metempiricist) depends on the *how* of the scientist; that is why pre-scientific metaphysics richly deserved all that Comte said about it.

Substance, we know, is restless; and everywhere we see the fruits of its instability. Science has framed a concept whereby to clothe the report of its behaviour; that concept is Determinism; *i.e.*, every event is connected in a calculable way with other events. A Universal Determinism will be consonant with a philosophy either monistic or radically pluralistic.

G. H. TAYLOR.

(To be concluded.)

*Some Sanctimonius Gammon.

In a recent article on St. Simeon Stylites we referred to the new edition of Alban Butler's *Lives of the Saints*, on which Father Thurston S.J. is engaged. It was not strictly relevant in that article to mention one characteristic of this prodigious work which, since it is significant, shall be dealt with here. Not content with "revising" and "copiously supplementing" the original work, and adding all the persons who have reached the height of canonization in the last 200 years, and those who have attained the lesser and preliminary eminence of beatification, Father Thurston is including a number of names of persons who, so far as he knows, may have had no actual existence at all, let alone a sanctified one. We will take a few examples of this curious form of historical writing from Volume I (January):—

(1) St. Munchin (A.D. 640)? "Nothing, practically, is known of St. Munchin, though he is the patron of the diocese of Limerick, and his feast is kept there as a double of the first class." That he was ever bishop of Limerick, or a bishop at all, "seems extremely doubtful." Also, "no historical information exists as to what he did, or the epoch at which he lived."

(2) St. Apollinaris (Syncretia) (A.D. 420)? Appears in the Roman Martyrology on January 5, "but belongs to the category of religious romances." Supposed to have disguised herself as a man, and lived as a hermit. "Her sex was only discovered by her fellow hermits after death."

(3) St. Valentinus (? A.D. 440) "Very little is known about St. Valentinus, though a fairly long medieval bio-

graphy of him is printed in *Acta Sanctorum*, but this, as all are agreed," is "historically worthless."

(4) St. Reinold. (A.D. 960)? Very little is known of St. Reinold," but "tradition connects him with the family of Charlemagne." He could "have had nothing to do with Charlemagne." He is variously reported to have died in 697 A.D. and 750 A.D. His alleged remains were "translated" to Dortmund, Westphalia, "in the eleventh century."

(5) St. Garibaldus. (A.D. 762)? "We know practically nothing about the life of this holy (*sic*) prelate."

(6) S.S. Julian and Basilissa. (A.D. 305)? "Lived together by mutual consent in perpetual chastity." The "acts" of these saints "are mere romances abounding in contradictions."

(7 and 8) St. Taliana (A.D. 230)? St. Martina (A.D. 225)? The acts of St. Taliana "are almost word for word identical with those of St. Martina." The former is supposed, "having been torn with hooks and combs, exposed to wild beasts, and cast into flames," to have "suffered no harm," but "at last passed away to heaven when smitten by the sword." This was also the end of St. Martina. She was the subject of "great devotion in the seventh century." Her "acts" are "full of preposterous miracles," such as that "when she was wounded, milk flowed from her body in place of blood." The "very existence of St. Martina remains doubtful."

Father Thurston justifies his book, which includes many other items of this sort, and hopes it will show, by the additions, that the "great variety of aspects under which the sanctity of the church has manifested itself" in more recent times "do not fall short either in interest or practical helpfulness" of the earlier records. We should like to know why it is worth while to retail to-day, in the interests of piety, "romances" like some of those above quoted? These learned volumes will not be read, any more than were the original *Acta Sanctorum*, by those who will hear only of the vast researches that have been involved in their production. If it pleases a poor, ignorant Catholic in Limerick to think that St. Munchin is the patron of that city, so that he can (according to the Church's teaching) pray to him in his difficulties, Father Thurston is not interested in the fact that "he was never a bishop at all," and is doubtless quite ready, if in Limerick on that day, to join in keeping his feast "as a double of the first class." And, if it should be suggested that this was a deception of the Irish peasant, his reverence would reply that he has himself put it on record that "nothing practically is known about St. Munchin." What transparent honesty! It is not for nothing that, in his own Preface to this volume, Father Thurston smugly observes that these tales are not meant for the learned, and that "curiosity and vanity" will hinder the reception of them in the spirit intended.

ALAN HANDSACRE.

* Passages in inverted commas are from the text.

Science and Obscurantism.

ONE of the most amusing things in this highly interesting world of scientific marvels, bootlegging and racketeering, wisdom and folly, is the fashion in which persons prominent in the public esteem air their opinions on everything under the sun, and also beyond that beneficent orb, on everything in general and nothing in particular.

Exemplification of the above remarks may be found in an interview given to the *Daily Herald* of September 16, by Sir Francis Younghusband, the explorer. "We are not Alone in the Universe," is the title of the interview, the somewhat question-begging nature of which will hardly be noticed by the thousands of fans, quite innocent of any knowledge of science, who regularly read that infallible organ. For who are they to question the opinions of a man who is prominent in the world of exploration, irrespective of whether or not he knows anything at all about the subject on which he condescends to enlighten or mystify his audience? Therefore, let us believe—because a prominent person has said it!

Sir Francis leads off with the remark that "no one who has contemplated the starry heavens on a clear night can help coming under their spell." Well, speak-

ing for myself, I have often "contemplated" the stars, and have read scores of books on astronomy, but I have never been conscious of a "spell" as such. Sir Francis Younghusband would, I suppose, put this quite deplorable state of mind down to my hopelessly materialistic outlook on existence, but it is nevertheless true. There is a good deal of insincerity in this talk about celestial spell-binding. People who have never read a line of scientific literature or looked through a telescope, mumble the words "awe," "reverence," etc., and tell us how we are dwarfed and humbled by the discoveries of modern astronomy. It is a hollow piece of rhetoric. The spectacle of the universe unfolded by science is not properly calculated to inspire any emotion whatever. We do not feel reverent, awed, or humbled in contemplating it. It is a colossal fact, and if any emotion whatever were profitable in gazing upon this grandiose panorama it should be one of pride in the modern mind which has so far so stupendously mastered the universe, and a wish that this wonderful power should be expended more upon the practical problems of life.

The gist of Sir Francis Younghusband's excursion into scientific matter lies in his assertion that, as "life has appeared on earth," it "proves that there is a Power working in and on the universe which is capable of producing life." The connexion is not at all obvious, and in any case modern science knows nothing of any mysterious "Power" working in and on the universe, capable of producing anything. That arch-mystic of modern times, Sir O. Lodge, could have told Sir Francis never to invoke the word "power" if you want to think clearly. The fallacy is plain. A person who is unacquainted with science talks freely about "power," "vital force," etc., and imagines them to be substantial realities. This is altogether wrong. Energy and force are merely expressions for certain relations of particles or masses of matter to each other. It is a pity our explorer did not look up a few of the expressions used in physics; he would not then have fallen into such a childish error with reference to the word "Power," and there is not the slightest justification for endowing it with a capital "P," thus making a gratuitous entity of the word and mystifying the ignorant.

We are next asked to consider how this "Power" has "produced life and mind" on the earth. Previously our oracle had remarked on the fact that as our solar system had been displaced from the unique position it had once held owing to the sun's central station in the universe, we could "now argue that since life has appeared here, therefore it must be characteristic of the universe and must appear elsewhere."

Before, when men thought they were uniquely situated in the universe, we could not have so argued. Now, I am quite willing to entertain the idea that there may be other planets with populations upon them, somewhere in the depths of space. We must beware of narrowness in such matters. But the logical position of Sir Francis Younghusband does not seem to me to be overwhelming. To argue that because the solar system has been displaced from a once lauded position to one of comparative insignificance, and that a life has appeared on the earth, therefore it must have appeared elsewhere in the universe, is like arguing that because Bill Jones the dustman is expecting a new addition to his family, therefore the family of his workmate John Smith is anticipating a like event. There is no "must" about the matter. It is a question of evidence. There is life on the earth, and it is the only life science knows. If there are conditions elsewhere approximating those of the earth it is reasonable to assume an evolution of life with the same general development of organs, etc. That is why I say we must beware of narrowness in these things. We do not know. Science does not know, and the inferences, which Sir Francis says he "cannot help drawing through combining the results of science with the view which most philosophers hold, that the universe is ultimately spiritual, not material," are just ignorance of all that science teaches about the universe in general.

The dogmatism of our oracular explorer is at times most amusing. Says he: "All that we can be sure about is that the universe, being in its essence spiritual, life must be manifesting itself in one way or another in countless other parts of the universe," and he goes on

to remark that "what particular forms in (life) may take there we cannot possibly say. Even human beings show extraordinary variety." Then comes the following priceless gem: "A cannibal from the South Seas is a very different man from the Archbishop of Canterbury," a most unfortunate combination! The difference between the cannibal and the Archbishop is to the eye only, one of degree, not of kind. For they are both religious, both as superstitious in their own way, and both believe in Mumbo-Jumbo! The only difference being that the Mumbo-Jumbo of the Archbishop is more elaborate than that of the cannibal.

I have not space enough to deal with all the debatable points raised in Sir Francis Younghusband's press interview, but I may notice his final *non requitudo*. He enunciates the totally erroneous and indefensible proposition that "the conservation of values is just as much a law of the universe as the conservation of energy." This coupling of one of the great generalizations of physical science with a so-called mystical conservation of values could only be done by one who did not know what he was talking about. To talk about values in discussing the universe at large is to land oneself in a morass of obfuscation. What does the phrase "conservation of values" mean? Apart from the relations expressed between human beings it does not, and cannot, mean anything at all. And to raise it to the dignity of a general law of the universe is just windy clap-trap and nothing more. It is nonsense, and the mere fact of a prominent person in the public eye, like Sir Francis Younghusband, giving vent to such an utterance ought not to prevent us from calling it by its proper name.

H. SANGER.

Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."
SOCIALISM AND FREETHOUGHT.

SIR,—I believe that Socialists who are not Atheists, and Atheists who are not Socialists are intellectually "half-baked."

That does not alter the fact that I consider that in the *Freethinker* for October 4, 1931, you state the case absolutely for the N.S.S. not seeking alliance with any political body.

But will the *Freethinker* be logical and refrain from advocating, as it has done in the past, that readers give their votes at elections to individuals prepared to support Freethought measures? For political elections my mind is made up politically, and my views on religion are subservient (this follows the argument in your article.)

J. HUTCHISON.

[There is an obvious distinction between standing clear from any political party and advising Freethinkers to support a candidate who will support a Bill for, say, the repeal of the Blasphemy Laws.—ED.]

SIR,—I have been a member of the N.S.S. now for nine years, but have never pestered you yet with a letter. But after reading your article in the *Freethinker*, October 4 issue, I decided that I would like to congratulate you on the masterly way that you dealt with your subject, "Socialism and Freethought." I have been a Socialist for the last thirty-five years, but I can see the danger of such a body as the N.S.S. getting attached to any political party. I stand firstly as a Secularist, secondly as a Socialist, thirdly as a Humanitarian. As for myself I am the lone bird here and things do not improve, but later on I hope to get in touch with the Plymouth Branch and see if we can make some headway.

Hoping that you may live long to direct the policy of the N.S.S.

T. TRESIDDER.

SIR,—In the issue of the *Freethinker* for October 4, you deal with the position of the National Secular Society in relation to Socialism. Writing as an outsider, it appears to me that your general attitude on the question is a logical one. But why the misleading statements about the attitude of Socialists towards religion? You know that the Labour Party in this country does not carry the title "Socialist Party," and you also know

that the Socialist Party of Great Britain is utterly opposed to the Labour Party, and claims that Socialism and religion are incompatible. Why do you carefully omit all reference to this? and at the same time give the name "Socialist Party" to the party whose name is the Labour Party? What would you say if Catholics argued from the assumption that all non-Catholics must be Lutherans? I am surprised that you should be unwilling to allow to the Socialist Party of Great Britain the accuracy of statement that you endeavour to allow to your religious opponents. You should be able to prevent your hostility to the Socialist Party's political doctrine from colouring your comments on the religious issue.

P. LEWIS.

[We are not aware that the Socialist Party of Great Britain included all the Socialists in Great Britain, nor that there were no Socialists in the Labour Party. Our critic's remark seems to be built upon the assumption that this is the case. There seems a little of the three tailors of Tooley Street about this letter.—E.D.]

ECONOMY, WISE AND UNWISE.

STR,—I would like to point out one of the glaring anomalies in our present-day so-called civilization, as exemplified in this highly Christianized country.

In the September 23 issue of the *Listener*—the official organ of the B.B.C.—was published a letter, in which was expressed surprise by a number of highly eminent men, at the manner in which the taxpayers' money is being squandered on armaments; the Government have voted the huge sum of £108,000,000 for possible destructive purposes, for the taking of human life, that most sacred of all possessions to those who profess "brotherly love." With £108,000,000 it should be possible to start a most magnificent war!

Under the plea of economy the Public Health Service grant has been reduced from a paltry 1½ million to a miserable 1¼ million—it seems so utterly ludicrous this disparity between the two sums voted, one for the maintenance of a destructive institution. And in the face of this, on Sunday, September 27, a broadcast appeal was made for aid for the Mount Vernon Cancer Hospital, which is supported by voluntary contributions. At this hospital where they have but 150 beds, they are so handicapped by lack of funds that fifty per cent of the beds lie idle and are unavailable for the treatment of this dread malady from which over 50,000 people die every year in this country.

The average initial outlay to maintain a hospital bed—in perpetuity—is about £1,000, so that to keep these seventy-five empty beds available for patients, all that is necessary is a relative paltry £75,000. But no, whilst we can afford to spend annually anything around 100,000,000 pound on death dealing instruments, the alleviation of suffering humanity to the extent of £75,000 is beneath our notice.

How futile, how very futile.

H. TRITELBAUM.

FREETHOUGHT IDEAS.

STR,—For my part I would hold that instead of shying pebbles at Drs. Inge and Barnes, we as Freethinkers ought "to burn a proud candle" in their honour for the inestimable service which they do us in bringing our ideas before thousands upon thousands of people who have either never heard about them at all, or else have regarded them with utter contempt in the belief that they were invented by a set of base fellows worthy of nothing but the pillory and the stocks.

C. CLAYTON DOVE.

GARDENER, life experience (Atheist) already partly engaged, wants odd jobs or whole days. H. H., 5 Hillside Road, Stamford Hill, N.15.

ACADEMY CINEMA, Oxford Street, (Opposite Waring & Gillows). Regent 4361.

Sunday, October 18.

The Banned Russian Sound Film.

"THE BLUE EXPRESS,"

Trauberg's Brilliant Picture of the Chinese Revolution.
(Adults only).

Obituary.

MRS. LILY ROBINSON.

I AM sorry to have to report the death of one of our most loyal and enthusiastic members.

Mrs. Lily Robinson has been a Secularist for a long number of years, and was one of the founders of the Chester-le-Street Branch. She has been suffering for the past few years, but even during her sufferings her thoughts, were for others, and the Freethought Movement always had a loyal supporter in herself.

Her noble character and generosity endeared her to all with whom she came in contact. As she had wished, a Secular Service was conducted at the graveside in the presence of a large number of relatives and friends by myself. She had no fears for death, and in her last moments was strengthened by her interest in our cause.

She was forty-nine years of age. Our sympathy is with her husband, son, and relatives.—J.B.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

LONDON.

OUTDOOR.

FULHAM AND CHELSEA BRANCH N.S.S. (corner of Shorrols Road, North End Road): Saturday, at 7.30, Messrs. F. Barnes, F. Day and C. Tuson.

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.—A meeting will be held at White Stone Pond, Hampstead, near the Tube Station every Sunday morning at 11.30 a.m. Speaker to-day Mr. L. Ebury.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Liverpool Street, Camberwell Gate): Friday, October 28, at 8.0—Mr. L. Ebury—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. Every Wednesday, at 7.30, Messrs. C. E. Wood and C. Tuson; every Friday, at 7.30, Messrs. A. D. McLaren and B. A. Le Maine. Current *Freethinkers* can be obtained opposite the Park Gates, on the corner of Edgware Road, during and after the meetings.

INDOOR.

HAMPSTEAD ETHICAL INSTITUTE (The Studio Theatre, 50 Finchley Road, N.W.8, near Marlborough Road Station): 11.15, Lord Snell of Plumstead—"What is our English Heritage?"

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (New Morris Hall, 79 Bedford Road, Clapham, S.W.4, Hall No. 5, near Clapham North Station, Underground): 7.30, Debate—"Is Socialism Sound?" *Affir.*: Mr. L. Ebury; *Neg.*: Mr. H. Cutner.

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Oliver Goldsmith School, Peckham Road): 7.0, D. Harold Moody—"Some Dangers in Governing Weaker Peoples."

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1): 11.0, S. K. Ratcliffe—"Fresh News from Russia."

STUDY CIRCLE (N.S.S. Office, 62 Farringdon Street, E.C.4): Monday, October 19, at 8.0 p.m., Mrs. H. Grant will open a discussion on "Citizenship."

THE CONWAY DISCUSSION CIRCLE (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square Holborn, W.C.1): Tuesday, October 20, at 8.0, Sir Leo Chiozza Money—"The Ethics of Unemployment."

THE NON-POLITICAL METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (City of London Hotel, 107 York Road, Camden Road, N.7, five minutes from the Brecknock): 7.30, Mr. C. Powell—"Vivisection is Cruel and Useless."

WEMBLEY AND DISTRICT BRANCH N.S.S. (Zealley's Cafe, 100 High Road, Wembley): 7.30, Mrs. Grout—"Lies Told to Children."

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

BIRKENHEAD (Wirral) BRANCH N.S.S. (Boilermakers' Hall, Argyle Street, Birkenhead, entrance in Lorn Street): 7.0, E. Egerton Stafford, President Liverpool (Merseyside) Branch—"Modern Atheism."

BRADFORD BRANCH N.S.S. (Godwin Cafe, Godwin Street) : 7.30, Mr. H. Morgan—"Was Joan of Arc a Spiritualist?"

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N.S.S. (Bristol Street Council Schools) : 7.0, Mr. R. H. Rosetti (London)—"Do We Need Religion?"

EAST LANCASHIRE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION (28 Bridge Street, Burnley) : 2.30, "The Wide Issues of Rationalism," a paper written by Charles McLean, Esq., of S.D.F. Burnley, to be read by Enoch Atherton, Esq., of Blackburn. Questions and discussions.

GLASGOW BRANCH N.S.S. (City Hall, Albion Street, No. 2 Room) : 6.30, Open Meeting—"Is Atheist Propaganda Desirable?"

HULME TOWN HALL, Stretford Road, Manchester, Sunday Afternoon, at 3.0, Mr. Chapman Cohen, President N.S.S., will lecture on "Secularism." In the evening, at 6.30, on "The Disease that Kills Religion." Admission free. Questions and discussion invited.

LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate) : 6.30, Mr. Harry B. Lowerison—"The Religion of Roman Leicester."

LIVERPOOL (Merseyside BRANCH N.S.S. (Transport Buildings, 41 Islington, Liverpool, entrance Christian Street) : Mr. J. Clayton (Burnley)—"Spirits or Spoo?" Admission free. Current *Freethinkers* and other literature on sale.

PLYMOUTH BRANCH N.S.S. (Plymouth Chambers, Drake Circus, Hall No. 5) : 7.0, Mr. A. E. Knowles—"A Free-thinker's Experience of the Spiritualist Movement."

PAISLEY BRANCH N.S.S. (Baker's Hall, 5 Forbes Place) : 7.30, Mr. J. McMillan—"A Survey of Industrial History." Part 3.

OUTDOOR.

BRIGHTON BRANCH N.S.S.—Branch meetings at 164 Elm Grove (corner of Linton Street) on the third Thursday in each month at 8.0. Will members please take note.

CO-OPERATIVE WOMEN'S GUILD, Cheapside, Tuesday, October 20, 1931, Lecture at 7.30 p.m., by Mr. J. Clayton. Subject—"The Birth of the Soul."

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.—Wednesday, October 21, at 8.0, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

SHAHAM HARBOUR.—Saturday, October 17, at 7.0, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

SUNDERLAND.—Sunday, October 18, at 7.0, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

**LEICESTER : : :
SECULAR SOCIETY.**

JUBILEE . BAZAAR
November 14th and 15th : 1931

Held in celebration of the
50th ANNIVERSARY
of the Opening of the Secular
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