

The

FREETHINKER

FOUNDED · 1881

EDITED BY CHAPMAN · COHEN · · · · · EDITOR · 1881-1915 · G · W · FOOTE

VOL. LI.—No. 43

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25, 1931

PRICE THREEPENCE

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

Views and Opinions.

Civilized Savages.

HERE are a few interesting citations. Number one:—

A spirit taketh him, and . . . it teareth him . . .
And Jesus said, Bring him hither. And as he was a
coming the devil threw him down and tare him.
And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the
child.

Number two:—

The Lushais of Assam believe in . . . numerous
demons, and . . . to their agency are ascribed all
the illnesses and misfortunes that afflict humanity.

Number three:—

Wherefore, whatsoever your sickness is, know you
certainly that it is God's visitation.

Number four:—

In our opinion deceased was at the time possessed
of an evil spirit.

Number five:—

Evil spirits definitely enter into a person's life
. . . That is the teaching of the Bible. In the mis-
sion fields the exorcising of evil spirits plays a large
part in the making of a Christian.

The first of these citations is from the New Testa-
ment. The second is from *The Golden Bough*, but
might be taken from any one of a hundred or more
works on anthropology. The third is from the Eng-
lish Prayer Book. The fourth is from a report of an
inquest at Oldham, on October 14. The fifth is from
a statement of the Bishop of London's chaplain, pub-
lished in the *News-Chronicle* for October 15. The
citations vary considerably in date, and also differ in
their relation to the best contemporary knowledge,
but will some good, kind Christian tell me what differ-
ence exists between any of these cases? How is Jesus
superior to the savage and his local spirits of disease?
How does the Bishop of London's chaplain and the
Oldham jury of Christians differ from Jesus and the
savage? Culturally, they are all on the same level.

So far as this issue is concerned the spiritual home of
the lot is in forest clearings on the very lowest levels
of human culture. If Jesus is right, the rest of the
bunch are also right, and if they are right modern
science and modern medicine are the veriest shams.

* * *

A Queer Lot.

The Oldham inquest was concerned with the
suicide of a clergyman, who was found gassed in his
garage. The jury, by the way, was curiously con-
stituted. It included two churchwardens, a choir
master, a schoolmaster and some "members of the
choir." If the jury was not specially selected such a
chance selection was very peculiar. The coroner,
who accepted the verdict of insanity, with its added
statement that the vicar was possessed of an evil
spirit, appeared to match at least the majority of the
jury. Common sense might have led him to demur
to the "evil spirit" part of the verdict. I am quite
sure if the jury had said, as it reasonably might have
said, that the vicar was of unsound mind, and that
his insanity had been aggravated by his religious
beliefs, the coroner would have raised some objection
to it. Perhaps he thought that it really would not
do to make plain that the belief in possession by evil
spirits is an integral part of Christian teaching. So
the coroner said he agreed with the verdict.

The Vicar of Bolton was a man of strong religious
feeling. It is true that there had been suspicions as
to his sanity, but *all* insane people are religious—
even Atheists who become insane revert to religion
after they have lost their mental balance. As far back
as 1906, the vicar, while still a lay reader had been
certified as insane, but instead of being confined, he
was ordained. It is true he thrashed his children un-
mercifully, but he might have cited scriptural
warranty for that, and the Church has always
favoured severe punishments. He also "cursed" his
wife in proper scriptural manner, when he would
adopt the attitude "of one administering a bless-
ing." At any rate one cannot, in a Christian country,
put down the wild views of the Vicar to his insanity.
They were merely aggravated by it. And the opinion
of the jury, apparently accepted by the Coroner, that
the Vicar was possessed by a devil follows from the
teachings of Jesus. This is also the opinion of the
Bishop of London's chaplain (probably shared by the
bishop). It is in line with the teachings of the Church
of England, the teachings and practices of the Roman
Church, and savages everywhere.

* * *

Back to Jesus.

I notice that a number of Lancashire papers are
commenting very unfavourably on the Coroner—who
by the way has often the impertinence to open an in-
quest with prayer—accepting the verdict of the Vicar
being possessed by an evil spirit. But why the pro-

test? None of these papers protests when a Coroner administers an oath, which is really calling upon the (adopted) tribal spirit to punish witnesses if they will not speak the truth. None of them objects to the use of the New Testament in the courts, or in the schools, and if the New Testament does not clearly teach that men may be possessed of spirits what does it teach? We hear a lot of "Getting back to Jesus," well, this benighted Jury and Coroner had got back to Jesus, that was the trouble. In fact they had never left him. It is almost useless asking writers to be quite honest where Jesus is concerned, but one must try. And we seriously ask the *Liverpool Post* and the other papers that have commented on the Coroner's religious imbecility to say wherein there is any difference between the Oldham performers and Jesus Christ? So far as these men are Christians they believe as they do because they believe that Jesus knew what he was talking about. But if he was wrong on "possession," then he might have been wrong about other things. Perhaps he was not the Son of God. Perhaps some quite unknown Jew stood in relation to him. Perhaps he was wrong about the interview he had with the devil. Perhaps he was as ignorant as the Jury the Bishop of London's chaplain. We are in a strange world! Christians swear that our only hope lies in following Jesus, but when a jury of Churchwardens and other religious odds and ends follow Jesus in one of the clearest of his teachings, the newspapers hint that such men are unfit to serve on a jury! Follow Jesus in fact as well as in words, and nowadays you stand a good chance of being in the mental condition of the Oldham jury or of the man on whose body they were holding an inquest.

* * *

God Help Us!

A further illustration of the savage in our midst is furnished by another incident of the past week. We are on the eve of a General Election, and our ears are being deafened by the cry that the country is in danger. Our political and financial guides are exhibiting their wisdom by finding out some thirteen years after the war ended, that the war has nearly ruined the world. And that is not true. It was not the war, but the "peace" after the war that has ruined the world. We pointed out at the time of the formulation of the Versailles treaty, that we were missing the one chance the world had seen of putting an end to war. But it was seen fit to create a number of new nationalities, to arm each, to erect barriers round each, to begin a new race for armaments, and to give the most military-minded nation in Europe the control of a large part of the Continent of Europe. And our financiers and business geniuses are surprised when these new arrangements work themselves out to their inevitable end! So we are faced with a General Election, in which those who have had charge of affairs tell us that they have no idea what ought to be done, but we must return a Government strong enough to sit down to see what can be done. It is convicted ineptitude appealing to an unthinking electorate. I do not wonder that in these circumstances the religious leaders chip in with that universal cry of helplessness, "God help us!" In such a situation it is not surprising that clerical knavery should appeal to religious folly.

So the Archbishops of Canterbury and York send out a call to prayer. The people are asked to offer up continuous prayer for the country. They say that we cannot hope to meet the claims of the situation except through the aid of God. The Roman Catholics also send out an appeal for their people to pray to God for guidance, even while the priests are ordering their followers how to vote. And not to be behind-

hand, the President and Secretary of the Free Church Council also issue an appeal to their followers to indulge in constant prayer, and to bring before candidates the policy of the Free Churches as laid down by the resolutions of the last Assembly. In the general clamour the churches—all of them—must make their voices heard. Here and there it may persuade a number of the enlightened electorate that in laying their views before the candidates they are carrying out the will of God. God help us!

* * *

Pious Humbug.

All this, granting the genuineness of belief in the efficacy of the prayers offered, really belongs to the same level of culture as the Oldham jury's opinion that their Vicar was possessed of a devil. Christians belong to all sorts of political parties. Does anyone imagine that they will vote differently because they pray daily between the issue of the "call," and the elections? God is to be asked to guide the electors in sending to the House of Commons "men who have both wisdom and unselfishness." But there is already in the House of Commons a chaplain who prays to God that the members may be endowed with wisdom and unselfishness. And look at the answer? If God really wishes wise and unselfish men sent to the House, and if we may offer a suggestion to God Almighty how to do it, we suggest that his best plan would be to raise the mental level of the electorate. I imagine that most people know that the next House of Commons will be pretty much like the last one, and I have a strong conviction that the really important question to a genuine democracy is not so much the kind of men who are in Parliament, but the kind of men who are outside. All the gods the world has ever heard of cannot keep a Parliament on the right lines unless there is outside a free press and an independent public opinion.

As it is, the prayers that will be said from thousands of pulpits will only add to the general humbug. The most they will do will be to rationalize and sanctify self-interest. Each praying elector will have his prejudices confirmed, and will find a direct confirmation from God of his own predilections. The praying Conservative, and Socialist, the Liberal, the Freetrader and Protectionist, will each say that God has inspired them how to act. God, like St. Paul, will be all things to all men. To all who believe in him he will be the mirror of their passions, their desires, their prejudices, and their stupidities.

* * *

The Persistence of the Savage.

Look at the situation! There is the Oldham jury solemnly returning a verdict that their mad Vicar was possessed of a devil, and the Coroner accepting the verdict without a word of remonstrance. You have the leaders of all the Churches combining to ask people to pray that God, who is not really an essential part of the British Constitution, will tell the people how to vote, and the advice is hailed as a "lead to the people" from their spiritual guides. But the undeveloped mentality indicated by the verdict of the Oldham Jury is not confined to Oldham. It is common all over the country; its existence is demonstrated by the "call to prayer" by leaders of the Churches. And everyone of the people who thinks in this way, the jury, the coroner, the Archbishops, the Ministers, the Cardinals, the people who think that their prayers will really help them to come to an intelligent conclusion, have votes! The country is in danger, and we are left to find a way out with the assistance of this type of mind! Is there any wonder that we had a European War? Need we wonder

that we had a Versailles "Peace"? Is it a marvel that the world is as it is?

It is all an example of the persistence of the savage, the inability of the primitive type of mind, which at the ballot box counts for as much as the most scientific intellect, and must do so, functioning amid conditions that call for an entirely better type of intelligence. That primitive type of mind may be deceived, cajoled, swindled, misled. It has no degree of information worth bothering about to apply to what comes before it. It has no adequate standard to measure what has been done or what it is proposed to do. It is hardly worth the saying that if we would civilize man we must kill the savage, but that is really the task before us. It was primitive modes of thinking that led the world into war; it was primitive modes of thinking that created the peace of Versailles, it is the persistence of this type of thought that prevents our finding the way out. The Oldham jury, and the "call to prayer" are indications of the existence of a type of intelligence that no country can tolerate without having to pay a heavy reckoning.

CHAIRMAN COHEN.

Priests and Progress.

"We shall never enfranchise the world without touching people's superstitions; and even if we abolish the House of Lords we shall still dwell in the House of bondage unless we abolish the Lord of Lords, for the evil principle will remain to develop into new forms of oppression."—G. W. Foote.

The modern Democratic Movement has never proclaimed, and never sought after, an alliance with the clergy, of whom there are forty thousand of various denominations in this country alone. So evident is this aloofness that, whenever a Trade Union Congress is held, the clergy are certain to break out into hysterical appeals to Labour leaders to remember that the Churches and their all-powerful "God" have always been on their side. But, as an old proverb assures us, in vain is the net spread in the sight of the bird. The instinct of self-preservation on the part of Socialist and Labour leaders prompts other and safer measures than a too close contact with the Black Army of priests.

Why this feeling of estrangement should exist between the Democratic Movement and the Christian Churches is clear to the student of history, but not so clear to the man in the street. Men's memories are short, and the priestly wooing of Democracy may deceive numbers of worthy people. It is better to attach more importance to what the clergy do than what they say. In their hearts these priests care as little for the welfare of the working classes as the Sultan of Zanzibar for his slaves. The votes of the bishops in the House of Lords prove it beyond cavil and dispute. The bare record is sufficient to rouse the lasting hostility of all right-thinking people, and the shameful opposition to all forms of progress shows how hopelessly these priests are out of touch with democratic aspirations and the humanist tendencies of the ages. Scores of measures for the betterment of the conditions of labour have been opposed by them, and their bare record carries its own condemnation.

As legislators these bishops were the despair, not only of politicians, but of the plain average citizen. Lord Shaftesbury, himself a Christian, asked, bitterly, "Of what use are the Bishops in the House of Lords?" The pages of Hansard's "Parliamentary Debates" supplied the answer. The stubborn face that Ecclesiasticism has shown to most reforms which would have benefited the human race is almost past belief. It opposed the great Reform Bill and thought

to exclude from all political power great masses of law-abiding people keenly interested in politics. It fought ingloriously to keep little children of tender years in factories; it desired no liberty for English or Irish Catholics, Jews, Nonconformists, and Free-thinkers. It opposed, tooth and nail, the introduction of free, national education, and voted against admitting women as members of London Borough Councils. It never voted for the abolition of flagging women in public, beating women in prison, and the use of the lash in the Army and Navy. Even a purely humane measure for the provision of seats for tired shop-assistants excited its animosity. Ecclesiasticism has ever been the priestly figure with the outstretched arm; whilst upon its lips has been the unchanging cry, "thou shalt not!"

Even the Free Church clergymen are not exempt from this dog-in-the-manger attitude. They are everlastingly launching campaigns and crusades of taboos against cinemas, music-halls, Sunday relaxation, in the true tradition of the old Puritans who hunted "witches" with all the zest of footballers chasing a ball. Remembering the hostility of the bishops in the House of Lords, and the continuous activity of a whole army of Chadbands and Stigginses outside of Parliament, may we not point out that such a clerical caste in our midst is a real menace, not only to Democracy, but to society and the nation.

It only shows the unchanging nature of Priestcraft that the Black Army of clergymen should, even at this time, invite the representatives of Democratic movements to reconcile themselves to the Christian Churches. The plain truth is that organized Christianity has let the mastery of the Democratic movements pass to other forces. It is well that it should be so. It is the orthodox priestly attitude which is unchanged through the centuries, and which is the same in all nations, which makes the long-suffering Democratic give in the verdict of "guilty," when Priestcraft is arraigned at the Bar of Humanity.

For fifteen hundred years the Christian Churches taught Mr. John Smith that the joys of his salvation would consist largely in looking down upon the burning of Mr. John Jones. And if a man was brave enough to challenge their priestly arrogance, these priests saw that he was burnt right speedily in this world. If any person spoke even in a whisper, of social and intellectual freedom in those dark days of Faith, there were hardly sufficient instruments of torture to help him to his utter damnation in this world and the next.

The Christian priests had plenty of power, but they never used it on behalf of humanity, but only for their own purely selfish ends. They made and unmade kings; they threatened excommunication to whole nations; they set countries fighting for a difference of religious tweedledum and tweedledee; they imprisoned hundreds of thousands for heresy and witchcraft. They had almost unlimited power. Yet they failed to destroy such a thing as slavery. Abyssinia has been a Christian country for two thousand years, but this most brutal and degraded slave system flourishes there to this day. The present-day hypocritical wooing of Democracy by the Black Army of priests is nauseating. It has an aroma like that of a crowded cabin of a small Channel steamer on a rough day.

The forward march of Democracy will not be unduly delayed, despite the forty thousand priests. It has conquered many fortresses; its capture of others will be slow and sure. One of the last to fall will be Priestcraft itself. The trumpets are sounding for another assault, and those of us who fight well will help to hasten the final triumph of the Army of Human Liberation.

MIMNERMUS.

Christianity the Gospel of Renunciation.

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world."—(1 John ii. 15.)

"The friendship of the world is enmity with God."
(James iv. 4.)

"My kingdom is not of this world." (John xviii. 36.)

"Nature, the world, has no value, no interest for Christians. The Christian thinks only of himself and the salvation of his soul."—(Feuerbach. *The Essence of Christianity*. p. 287.)

THE Rev. Desmond Morse-Boycott has been telling the *Daily Herald* (September 30) readers some of his experiences. Fourteen years ago, he says: "I dreamed dreams. I thought I should convert multitudes. I meant to be an apostle. I meant to build altars of prayer, to storm the very heavens and make men enter. Now I am rather tired, and do not dream dreams." Mr. Morse-Boycott compares the Clerical with the Medical profession, and observes: "People trust the doctors, but not us. I mean, they welcome the doctor with open arms . . . They receive us, often with reluctance. Where they start with a vast prestige, we begin at arm's length." And he puts it down to lack of training and experience in those who enter the ministry. This seems to us a very superficial explanation.

We have no intention of jeering at Mr. Boycott over the failure of his dreams—although, if we remember rightly, Mr. Boycott is not averse to jibing at us occasionally. We think it is a deplorable thing for men to devote their lives to the service of a dying superstition, instead of devoting their energies to science, art, or literature, and the secular progress of humanity.

The real reason why the influence of the clergy has fallen so low, is that people no longer believe in the terrors of the after life upon which Christianity was founded. If there is no eternal punishment, then there is no need to be "saved," the "Plan of Salvation" is unnecessary, and Christianity has lost its driving power.

We have seen how the first Christians regarded the worldly life, as opposed to the heavenly life, and utterly worthless by comparison, and we shall find that view taken by all the greatest and most influential leaders of Christianity since.

There are two great classics describing the ideal life for a professing Christian, one is Catholic and the other Protestant, but both are in absolute agreement as to their view of the world and the Christian's relation to it. The Catholic one is *The Imitation of Christ*, by Thomas A. Kempis. The other *The Pilgrim's Progress*, by John Bunyan.

Thomas A Kempis declares:—

He is truly wise that counteth all things as dung, that he may win Christ (Chapter iii.)

Keep thyself as a stranger and pilgrim upon the earth and as one to whom the affairs of this world do nothing appertain. (Ch. xxiii.)

Assure thyself thou canst not have two paradises; it is impossible to enjoy delights in this world, and after that reign with Christ. (Ch. xxiv.)

Thou oughtest to be so dead to such affections of beloved friends, that (so far as thou art concerned) thou wouldest choose to be without all human sympathy. Man approacheth so much the nearer to God, the further he retireth from all earthly comfort (Bk. 2 Ch. xyii. *The Imitation of Christ*.)

The Protestant in no ways differs from the Catholic classic. In *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Bunyan sets forth his idea of the life of a Christian in relation to this world. The first thing that Christian—the hero of the story, according to Bunyan's idea—does, upon

his conversion, is to run away from home, desert his friends, his wife and children, utterly regardless of what becomes of them. The world is portrayed as "Vanity Fair," and wholly in possession of the Devil. Christian's life is a pilgrimage, a flight from all his responsibilities and duties as a man and a citizen. An utterly selfish concentration upon saving his miserable and worthless soul. Nor did Bunyan regard his story as an idle tale. He tells us himself that:—

While thus afflicted with the fears of my own damnation, there were two things would make me wonder: the one was, when I saw old people hunting after the things of this life, as if they should live here always; the other was, when I found professors [of Christianity] much distressed and cast down when they met with outward losses, as of husband, wife, child, etc. Lord, thought I, what a-do is here about such little things as these! ¹

Again, takes the case of Luther, the founder of Protestantism, who declared: "How much better is it that I should lose the whole world than that I should lose God, who created the world, and can create innumerable worlds? For what sort of a comparison is that of the temporal with the eternal? . . . One soul is better than the whole world." ² Or Calvin the founder of Calvinism: "If heaven is our home," asked Calvin, "what is the earth but a place of exile." ³

John Wesley, the founder of Wesleyanism, held exactly the same views. Under the date of December 22, 1780, he records in his *Journal*, a visit to the British Museum. "Seven large apartments are filled with curious books; five with manuscripts, two with fossils of all sorts, and the rest with curious animals. But what account will a man give to the Judge of quick and dead for a life spent in collecting all these." ⁴

Perhaps the following verses by Wesley are the most concise and accurate summary of Christianity ever pen'd:—

How, then, ought I on earth to live
While God prolongs the kind reprove
And props this house of clay?
My sole concern, my single care,
To watch, and tremble, and prepare
Against that fatal day!

No room for mirth or trifling here,
For worldly hope, or worldly fear,
If life so soon is gone:
If now the judge is at the door,
And all mankind must stand before
Th' inexorable throne!

Nothing is worth a thought beneath,
But how I may escape the death
That never, never dies!
How make my own election sure,
And, when I fail on earth secure
A mansion in the skies.

Richard Baxter, another pillar of Protestantism, declares: "God and mammon, earth and heaven, cannot both have the delight of thy heart." And again: "To have their good things on earth, is the lot of the most perishing sinners: doth it become Christians, then to expect so much here." ⁵

One of the "Signs of true Faith," says Taylor, in that church classic *Holy Living*, is "to be a stranger upon earth in our affections, and to have all our thoughts and principal desires fixed upon the matters of faith, the things of heaven." ⁶

How far the modern Christian has travelled from the faith!

W. MANN.

¹ J. Hamilton: *Life of Bunyan* (1845) p. xii.

² Feuerbach: *The Essence of Christianity*. p. 151.

³ D. F. Strauss: *The Old Faith and the New*. p. 94.

⁴ Baxter: *Saints Everlasting Rest*. p. 256-229.

⁵ Taylor: *Holy Living*. p. 216.

The Holy: The Inveterate Bane of Mankind.

"They have three words: well tyrants know their use
They pay them for their loan, with usury
Torn from a bleeding world—*God, Hell, and Heaven.*
God, a vengeful, pitiless, and almighty fiend
Whose mercy is a nickname for the rage,
Of tameless tigers hungering for blood."—*Shelley.*

THERE is not an insanity too grotesque for taboo, the imperceptible and intangible shield with which the holy or sacred is invariably enveloped to keep it alive as an implicit belief for countless ages, despite all the bizarre changes in the meantime. Indeed, holy taboo is the protective shield of all religious faiths, past and present, through inhibiting all appeal to the human reason. Take for instance that sacred book called the Bible. If the rational faculty was not prevented from functioning by the taboo with which it is swathed, would rational beings have maintained throughout the ages that fatuous medley of barbaric ignorance, impossible miracles, exploits of magic, preposterous legends, silly myths, fantastic events, and grotesque science to be objects of belief [for "belief" is to accept a statement to be true]? But to declare them, as they did, to be the "Word of God" is proof positive that the faculty was hopelessly paralysed.

The Genesis Epic opens with a brief record of an exploit of Magic on a scale so grand as might justify the epithet "infinite," viz., that the tribal God, Jahveh, by a mere phrase "Let there be," called the physical Universe into existence. This performance dwarfs all subsequent magical exploits to less than nothing.

A little later on we have a record of an achievement at the opposite pole of the spectacular. In verse 21 chapter 3, it is stated "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins and clothed them"—rather a derogatory performance for so mighty a magician.

Equally primitive and barbaric is the narrative about the speaking serpent and about the proclamation that Sin and death had entered the world as the result of eating an apple. Equally foolish to the unsophisticated reason is the record that the waters of the Red Sea and of Jordan divided themselves asunder and opened a passage for the Hebrews to get across.

Equally unbelievable are the statements that the Walls of Jericho collapsed at the sound of a trumpet; that the sun and the moon stopped at the command of Joshua to enable the Jews to finish a battle in the Valley of Agalon. Before any of these legends and countless others could form the objects of belief, the human reason had to be narcotized by the effluvium of taboo with which each and all were swathed.

The same comment applies with equal force to every item of the Christian creed. Not a single dogma or tenet of it could ever become the object of rational belief. Reason must not be allowed to examine one of them, or even to reflect upon it, so every dogma had to be placed within the shield of taboo which means "don't touch." The credal tenet is thus not the outcome of the individual's own thinking, but is injected, so to speak, into the mind by the priesthood, either directly or indirectly, and declared by it to be sacred or holy, which signifies that it is forthwith placed under the ban of taboo. These tenets are not native to the mind. They are "outposts" of the enemy planted by the invader, to "despoil" the land. Taboo is the immaterial fort to protect the foreign foe from the attacks of the native forces of reason.

Take, for instance, the dogma of the Trinity. To the unsophisticated human reason such a farrago of inanity could never become a rational belief. To the Gnostics, however, and indeed to the Christian Fathers in general, whose minds were hopelessly bemuddled by metaphysics, a medley like the Trinity would be a most delectable morsel. Their mental world consisted in the main, of words—mere words—and their "industry" was logomachy. Words were the common realities of life and the gnostic metaphysician knew no bounds to his work of verbal creations.

Incongruity, inconsistency, impossibility, contradictions of universal experience are not essentially absurd or grotesque in metaphysics. Hence the Christian Creed had no grotesqueness to the Gnostics and their confrère. The dogma of the Trinity was a rare tit-bit for the battle of words.

The second person of this Trinity, however, presents difficulties of its own, and which needed the protection of taboo even more than that of the Trinity dogma itself, for the problems raised by them are not metaphysical but logical, so metaphysical blether is interdicted.

This second person is said to be God and Man—a credal deliverance that is replete with implications so absolutely incompatible that unbiassed reason could never accept them as true if submitted to its decision and verdict. Every attribute or characteristic of the human and of the supposed or assumed characteristics of God are as antithetical as light is to darkness or as a plenum is to a Vacuum. They are irremediably incompatible.

Let us contrast a few obvious ones:—

The Man-Jesus is simply a complex organism for keeping up the life-fire of the body burning, by taking in fuel in the form of food-stuff, releasing its energy, transmuting it into different forms, and then transmitting it to the different organs to be retranslated into physical movement in the muscles, and into sensation and thought in the brain. The only energy we could ascribe to him as a God would be of the magical order by which alleged events occur in the absence of causation. The "event" or "effect" is then said to be a miracle. For example, to keep the body alive without taking any nutriment would be a miracle; and the source of the energy would be magical; and the being performing it might be denoted a God as it could not be done by a human being. There is no record that he ever did this. All the miracles accredited to him are of the trumpery, meaningless order of the medicine-man.

To be possessed of both, were it possible, would be absolutely senseless. The one makes the other wholly useless.

Again, the Man-Jesus would be like every other person, a bundle of sensations. Some of them would be natural, like hunger, thirst or a feeling of tiredness; some would be traumatic due to injuries. These sensations would be painful, varying in intensity from the disagreeable to poignant agony. The God-Jesus, on the other hand, could, ex-hypothesi, feel no pain. Hence the mind of the God-Man Jesus would simultaneously be the seat of pain and of no pain. In other words, pain would be present and absent at the same instant—an obvious absurdity. For example, the Man-Jesus would at times feel hungry, but the God-Jesus could feel no hunger. So the Man-God Jesus would be hungry and not hungry at the same instant—a self-contradiction.

Again, the Man-Jesus would at times require sleep, a state that deprives one for a while of personal consciousness, during which state he is in a sense non-existent. Whereas the God-Jesus would need no sleep: hence the Man-God Jesus would be both

awake and asleep at the same time—an obvious impossibility.

Finally, the mind of the Man-Jesus would be imbued with the crass ignorance characteristic of the age he lived in. The mind of the God-Jesus would, ex-hypothesi, be omniscient. So the God-Man Jesus would be omniscient and steeped in crass ignorance at the same instant—a most grotesque absurdity.

Of his ignorance, there is abundant evidence in the New Testament of his omniscience there is no evidence, absolutely none.

KERIDON.

(To be concluded.)

The Old World of Common Sense

IN his address to the British Association recently, General Smuts said a great many things that might well form the material for an extensive commentary. For the present we are desirous of dealing with his statement that "our first complete break with the old world of common sense" is made through the physical concept of space-time. This old world of common sense seems to get on some people's nerves. Admittedly it is a humdrum sort of affair, lending itself little to fantasy or theology, but we cannot escape from it so easily as some would have us believe. It simply refuses to leave us, like the dog that we cannot lose; and the better we understand the relationship of ourselves and our theories to it, the less capable we become of severing the connexion. What is the General thinking of? We ask this, yet, truth to tell, it is not of great consequence. What really matters is what everyone else thinks of this remark. That is why the responsibility is great on the President of the British Association to choose his words with the utmost care.

There are in this world numbers of people, notably among the clergy, who await the least opportunity to make a break from so-called common sense. Every step away from what some call the world of brute facts means to those people a step towards that hazy region of half-dreamy existence in which a philosophic abstraction may be found rubbing shoulders with the most primitive ideas, and in which it is difficult for the scientist to disentangle himself from the uninvited embraces of the medicine-man. It is a region in which anything may happen because everything is possible; in which nothing is certain because all is incalculable; in which religion, with restored prestige, is able to walk with a swagger because the governing principle of the new regime is mystery. The new physics is popularly supposed to have taken a step in this direction, and the General's remark gives colour to this supposition. In the popular mind the new world takes on characters somewhat in keeping with the savage notion of a spirit world. Things become less solid. Ghosts, long buried in the rubbish heap of bygone ignorance, rise again and stalk. We are supposed to feel elevated by the change because of some curious notion that a puff of smoke is more respectable than a pound of beef. Existence has taken on another dimension. We have become time-space phenomena. We are no longer men but events. Reality proceeds in a four dimensional time-space continuum, energy making sudden and unpredictable bursts of activity in the form of quanta. And all, as with the fate of Oedipus, is wrapt in the unfathomable bosom of the Inscrutable. What exactly is the significance of it all the man in the street does not know, except that it seems to open the road to a universe constructed on religious lines, and bearing a testimonial from Science. Let us try to understand, then, exactly

what this "old world of common sense" means, and just how far it is possible to break away from it.

The world of common sense, as spoken of by General Smuts, does not simply mean a world in which common sense is utilized for philosophic purposes. In that connexion common sense is only a plain phrase for rational thinking, and this is always assumed as the basis of philosophy, from which there can be no question of breaking. What the General means is the world of empirical reality, which is to say the world as we experience it at first hand. When we look at a bus going down the Strand we have before us an example of empirical reality, and we should say that the bus as we know it in this direct way is the bus of common sense; that, were we to accept this impression as representing the real bus, we should be taking the view that common sense dictates.

How, then, has the conception of time-space broken away from this position? To commence with we should remember that a break-away from this idea of reality is not new; what is new is the form the break-away takes. Philosophy has, since the time of Plato, discussed the notion of a reality that exists behind our empirical impression and is the cause of it, so that it is a matter of very old epistemology to doubt that the "common sense bus" is all that exists. What modern physics has done is to present us with something more definite than a mere metaphysical bus, whose existence we postulate but cannot in the least define. Einstein says to us, "If you make a calculation as to where the travelling bus will be at a certain time, as to its size or mass at a certain moment, you will find, if you work on the assumption that you are dealing with an entity as conceived by common sense, that you get the answer wrong." And what he means by getting the answer wrong is that the actual empirical bus will not be found at the expected spot, will not have the size or mass indicated by your calculation. This is a very important point. The reason why you have not discovered your mistakes up to now is that buses do not move fast enough to show them; but the error had actually occurred in astronomical calculations and been put down to instrumental inaccuracy before Einstein showed that it was a real mistake in the notion of the bodies dealt with. He now tells us that if only we will substitute for the "common sense bus" a mathematical conception, we will be able to work out the precise facts about the vehicle, and the answer will be right no matter what the speed.

But, to return to the point, in order to satisfy ourselves that the answer is right we must of course go back to the "common sense bus" to see whether the empirical facts are as expected. We say therefore that the mathematical conception, which is expressed in a time-space formula, must be representing a truer idea of the bus than the empirical, and so we have broken away from the "old bus of common sense." But now let us be careful, for this is where we go off the rails. We are apt to imagine that this is something like saying that common sense does not exist. That would be a grave error. The common sense bus expresses a relationship between something unreal because you show that it does not give you, at first hand, the material for a dependable calculation. The relationship which we call experience is the relationship in which we exist, and our only object in departing from ideas derived from it at first hand, or directly as we might say, is to make a calculation which will enable us to return to it with a more precise estimation. And ultimately we test

the value of our new idea in the only way we can, namely, against the very empirical experience it purports to explain and correlate. Thus we never can, while the nature of human mentality remains what it is, break away fundamentally from a "world of common sense." Whatever realities we may imagine behind it, we have always to admit that they eventuate in the relationship of empirical experience, and that they only remain valid in so far as they are consistent with it.

MEDICUS.

(To be concluded.)

A Thought for the Week.

It may be taken as proof of the iniquity of Atheism that were it not for the belief that they are under the constant supervision of some Divine Being, vast numbers of Christians would lose all sense of decency at home and abroad.—*Lucianus*.

Acid Drops.

The Archbishop of Canterbury issued an appeal for prayer in connexion with the elections, and followed it up with an address imploring all electors to vote for Mr. Macdonald. This is not playing fair with God. It assumes beforehand that God is on the side of Macdonald, which presumably Macdonald believes, or professes to believe. But it does seem strange to first of all pray to God how to act and then assert that in this election everyone should vote for a particular party. Still, the Archbishop is God's principal official representative in England, and he ought to know. And we really believe that no one knows more about the will of God than does the Archbishop.

But it is left for the Bishop worthily to sustain his well established reputation for kaledioscopic idiocy. In an article in the *Daily Express* for October 19, he says that no one has consulted God as to how to vote. He says that he ought to be "publicly and corporately consulted." That is a startling "Thought for the week," and if the Bishop can show us when and where God can be consulted, with any reasonable guarantee that he will give a reply, we would consult him ourself. We should like to get his opinion on a variety of things, including his opinion as to his servant Winnington Ingram. But, alas! God is not on the voting list, he is apparently taking no part in the election, and we should hesitate without the strongest evidence to saddle God with the responsibilities for the varied stupidities of the Bishop of London.

The two Free Church Councils jointly endorse approval of the Archbishop of Canterbury's appeal for a day of united prayer in the national emergency. Naturally the Free Churchmen wouldn't be out of any manœuvre for advertising religion, the Churches, and the parsons. After the day of prayer, how about a parsons' Day of Thanksgiving for the national emergency—properly regarded as a heaven-sent opportunity for advertising religion, the Churches, and the parsons?

The Secretary of the Lord's Day Observance Society has sent the following letter to the religious Press:—

The General Election is a great opportunity for all who have the highest welfare of the nation at heart to use a weapon at hand—the vote. In many constituencies up and down the land it is possible to strike a blow for righteousness. The Christian Sunday can be saved.

The Sunday Amusements Party are endeavouring to secure pledges from candidates in favour of the legislation of Sunday amusements of all kinds. This campaign for commercializing (and if possible destroying) the Lord's Day can be counteracted if Christian electors will also write to their candidates.

The Lord's Day Observance Society suggests that candidates should be asked if they will approve any Bill which would legalize (1) the Sunday opening of theatres and Vaudeville Halls, and (2) the Sunday opening of cinemas.

Hence, we gather that "the highest welfare of the nation" is intimately connected with keeping in force obsolete pious laws which prevent the citizen from enjoying his Sunday leisure as he may choose. How strange that this should be so! We had imagined that the enforcing of such laws was mainly concerned with the highest welfare of the parson.

Apropos of Mr. Baldwin's plea for the old word "piety" which has fallen on evil days, "Candidus," of the *Daily Sketch* suggests that "even a Radical might agree that the word is worth redeeming from its present contempt to higher uses." For our part, we are not sanguine that the word will be "redeemed" during this Freethinking age. To this generation, "piety" is associated with impertinent attempts to interfere with the citizen's liberty of choice and action. "Piety," is concerned with pre-scientific modes of thought, and primitive conceptions of the universe and of man's nature. This generation can discover no sufficient reason for redeeming "piety" from the contempt it has acquired. The best thing to do for "piety" is to give it a pauper's funeral.

Someone asks "the Padre" of the *Methodist Times* whether "making the best of a bad job is quite so virtuous as we make out." Well, the asking of such a query seems rather un-Christian. Surely it should be obvious that "bad jobs" are "sent" in order that Christians may be exercised in patience and Christian resignation, and other typically pious virtues. If people are encouraged to doubt whether making the best of a bad job is really virtuous, they will soon start wondering whether Christian resignation is a virtue. That sort of thing will never do. Christian men and women ought to be made to understand, once and for all, that they should be content to believe what they are told. The Kingdom of Heaven on earth will never be ushered in by people who question this and doubt that. The essence of true Christianity is "believe or be damned." Angels' wings are not fashioned from doubts.

There are in the opinion of Christians no end of reasons for thanking God, but we confess we have not heard before of one which has been found in Manchester, viz., "the twenty-fourth anniversary of the abolition of Sunday trading in meat." A "Church parade and thanksgiving service" of the Manchester, Salford and District Butchers and Meat Traders Association was held in St. Peter's Square, and a procession marched from there to the Cathedral for a service suitable for the occasion. It is to be hoped that use was not made of the hymn which refers to "the bleeding lamb" for, to judge from the report, the participants in this unusual ceremony did not include the slaughterers. Perhaps they have a society (and a thanksgiving) of their own.

The *Morning Post* remarks that "The B.B.C. rules about the kind of fairy tales which are broadcast for the youth of Britain are very strict." Presumably the expression "youth of Britain" has no age application. At any rate it explains why the kind of fairy tales sent out under the head of religion are restricted to the Christian type. If the youth of Britain were to hear the truth about religion over the air then what would the clergy do? In this respect the B.B.C. acts as the best dope provided in the circumstances.

A Devonshire reader of the *Daily Express*, Mr. Douglas Gordon, says that:—

All things considered, the hunting of deer with hounds constitutes the most humane method of reducing their numbers; and if only the public were better informed on this point useless controversy and heart-burnings would be avoided.

It is difficult to know whether to classify such a statement as cant, hypocrisy, or sheer stupidity. If large herds of deer are acknowledged to be a nuisance, then the first remedy is that of preventing large herds from being bred—every live-stock breeder knows a quite simple and humane way of achieving this. If this is not done and it is necessary to reduce the numbers of a herd, the alternative methods of reduction are not hunting or shooting, nor hunting or trapping, nor hunting or poisoning—as the deer torturers are fond of suggesting. The most humane method is to use a “humane-killer,” as employed by butchers. “All things considered,” says the medieval-minded apologist, racking his brains for an excuse to justify a mode of pleasure which necessitates cruelty to animals! With a little more intelligence he might discover a sport or pastime that does not involve fear and death to animals.

One of our religious papers with a Methodist complexion has made a great discovery. It has discovered that youth only laughs at the parson's criticism and disparagement and vituperation. And our contemporary is trying what affect a few nice, kind words will have on youth. So we are told that the rising generation is often misjudged and maligned. Criticism of youth is “not seldom thoughtless and ill-founded.” We learn that “in an age of questioning and challenge, youth is impatient of sham. Pretence and make-believe are detested.” There is an absence of hypocrisy. “And in this fearless sincerity of the best type of youth of today there is illimitable hopefulness.” Also, the “impassioned urge for freedom which is so characteristic of to-day's young people is too often interpreted by older folk as a love of lawlessness. Impatience with convention, and irritation at restraint, are not always evil things.” From all this we conclude that the parsons' in their disparagement of youth and their condemnation of the characteristics exhibited by the new generation, were altogether wrong. How strange it is that the parsons with the help of divine guidance and inspiration should have been wrong! What they should do now is to follow our contemporary's lead, and graciously approve, if not belaud, what they cannot alter. They could explain their “about face” as progressive revelation—a most usefully elastic term.

The Rev. Prof. E. S. Waterhouse has been advising Sunday-school teachers as to the best way to impart to the child the principles of Temperance—he means total abstinence from alcoholic liquor. It is unwise, he declares, to denounce all who take alcohol as “wicked.” Neither should the teacher stress over much the advantages of abstinence to health and pocket. There is, says the Professor, no need of an appeal to self-interest in support of a good cause. The Professor prefers the appeal based on “example.” This works out somewhat in this wise. Although a temperate use of alcoholic drink may not be harmful, the intemperate use of it is harmful to many. And so what one should do, for the sake of showing a good example to others, is to give it up altogether “for the sake of others.” We regret to say we cannot quite appreciate the logic of such argument. It is well known that intemperate eating is bad for one's health. Excessive enjoyment of theatres, cinemas, motoring, games, and so forth are bad also. Again, some doctors aver that “many people are ill because they indulge in too much clothing.” So what we temperate people ought to do, it would seem, is to go without any clothes at all! That is, if we adopt the “Temperance” plan of abstaining from anything which other people use intemperately, we ought to deny ourselves almost everything that gives pleasure to life, and also many things that happen to be essential to life. This is a queer kind of doctrine. But Prof. Waterhouse finds justification for it in Holy Writ. And so it is completely Christian—and completely silly. We may add that if total abstinence, or even real temperance, is a good cause, it is surely deserving of intelligent advocacy. It has nothing to lose and much to gain by employing arguments that will satisfy the reason of intelligent folk. Again, if one employs silly arguments to get children to

sign a total abstinence form, there is always a very real danger that they will, in maturity, reject both the arguments and the principles of “Temperance.”

Some “Cathedral Musings” in the *Manchester Guardian* are amusing for the naiveté of the author who thinks that the interior of a cathedral, “the height, the space, the gloom, the glory, may well move any man whatever his religious faith.” A sensitive person, this writer, being a Nonconformist, yet felt in the cathedral that, “though he shared the pride in the noble building,” he is “not made free of the full privileges of the temple.” This is a polite way of saying that most church parsons do not recognize dissenting ones, or admit their flocks to their altars. It was a perverse fate that led such a man to buy the *Church Times* on leaving the sacred edifice, and there to read “editorial regret that the Bishop of Wakefield had consented to take part in a gathering held “in a schismatic place of worship,” and, in another column, a reference to “the very serious portent” of certain Bishops having claimed the right “to admit members of other denominations to communion.” With a pathetic optimism the pained Nonconformist expresses the hope that as the Anglicans have recently designed to admit “full communion” to the Old Catholics, “the Anglican Church may be ready to deal with Nonconformists as kindly.” It is hard to disappoint this good man, but we regret to say that there has been a whole lot of protest—in the *Record* and elsewhere—from evangelical Anglicans against the recognition of the former body. When we are told that “a common allegiance to Jesus Christ” should “be a sufficient bond or tie to permit” Christians of every variety “to meet together around the common table of our Lord,” we have to point out that that very table, or altar, as other Christians call it, has been the cause of Christians killing one another, wrangling with one another, and excommunicating one another, for ages.

Fifty Years Ago.

THE authorities whose function it is to modify revealed religion, in accordance with the latest science, ought by this time to have something to show in connexion with the presidential address in the Health Section of the Social Science Congress. There is clearly an opening for some fine Christian philosophy in the matter of the propagation of disease by animalcules. In the absence of science, social and otherwise, “down to Judee,” the “author and finisher” of the faith could only illustrate the extensive character of the paternal responsibilities by asserting that the ups and downs in the career of the—in every sense—familiar sparrow were foreordained and duly recorded. It is needless to point out how much more telling would be the intimation that not a single disease-germ out of the millions which constitute a case of fever comes to an untimely end unobserved. M. Pasteur has opened up to the discerning eye new depths in the unsearchable wisdom of the unfindable. The world is now made fully aware that a contagious disease means the prosperity of an infinity of microscopic organisms. Being all “God's creatures,” they enjoy the divine supervision equally with the person whose interest it is to put them out of existence. Disease, in fact, is only a form of the beneficent activity of the All-wise. Human “health” is the suppression of corpuseular vitality, and “disease” means the coming into existence of intangible worlds of life. And the “Aristophanes of the Universe” gravely takes note of the proceedings and figures up the glory he gains from each of the extensive transactions known to mortals as cases of zymotic disease. What a comfort it must be to the believing mind to reflect that not a *Bacillus anthracis* meanders into the nostril of a bullock without the divine guidance! And as the warbling of the fly-gorged birds represents praise to the Creator, so doth the tumult in the veins of the chicken which hath fowl cholera indicate the grateful activity of nations of bacteria having a good time.

The “Freethinker,” October 23, 1881.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

- MRS. A. ROBERTSON.—To advertising the *Freethinker*, 2s. 6d.
 W. ROWE (S.A.).—Your newspaper cuttings are very welcome. Readers do us a favour in supplying us with any items which they consider of interest to the movement.
 W. KILDARE.—Pleased to have your appreciation of the improvement in the appearance of the *Freethinker*. We hope to make still further improvements as circumstances permit, but it must be borne in mind that all extras have to come out of deficit, and there is a limit to what we are able to produce out of nothing.
 C. MARTIN.—If we answered at length all the slanders on dead Freethinkers, and kept repeating the answers, we should have no room for anything else in the paper.
 T. NEWTON.—Assuming as true the question at issue does not really carry the argument any further.

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

The Secular Society, Limited office is at 62 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

The National Secular Society's Office is at 62 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

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

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

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

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

Sugar Plums.

To-day (October 25) Mr. Cohen lectures at the Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate, Leicester. The chair will be taken at 6.30. Mr. Cohen suggested to the Society that his visit should be postponed to a later date, owing to the public pre-occupation with the elections, but his offer to stay away was politely, but firmly refused. So the consequences are upon the Society's own head.

The Manchester Branch opened its winter session last week with two lectures from Mr. Cohen in the Hulme Town Hall. The audiences were good, considering the election fever, and extremely satisfactory. Mr. Monks took the chair at both meetings, with his usual efficiency, and we believe the bookstall attendants were busy.

The new Branch of the N.S.S. at Brighton sends a very creditable report of active work accomplished during the past six months in the open-air. The report shows what can be done by a few enthusiasts with a very small outlay, without collections. The Branch has been practically self-supporting. The Branch deserves the support of every Freethinker in the district, especially those unattached. The local Secretary is Mr. J. T. Byrne, 188 Elm Grove, Brighton, Sussex.

The Fulham Branch of the N.S.S. has arranged a course of Sunday evening meetings from November 1 until December 13. The course will open with a lecture from Mr. R. H. Roselli, on "Christianity's Harmony with Science-Anthropology." The title is, of course, "writ sarcastic." Each lecture commences at 7.30. We hope that West London Freethinkers will lend a hand to make these meetings a success. The Secretary's address is A. J. Mathie, 32 Micklethwaite Road, Fulham, S.W.6.

The new Birkenhead Branch of the N.S.S. will not be holding any meetings to-day (October 25). It is too near October 27. The Branch made a very good start with its meetings, but being a young society it needs the help of every Freethinker in the locality. We hope that these will make it a point of giving the meetings their support, and also help the Branch to get over those trials which are attendant on infancy. The Secretary's address is Mr. J. W. Porter, 63 New Chester Road, New Ferry, Cheshire.

The Rev. J. M. Connell has written an interesting book entitled *Lewes: Its Religious History* (W. E. Baxter Lewes and London: 3s.). He is a candid, but not very courageous, writer. The history of religion, whether in the County town of Sussex, or in general, must, if it be honestly written, be no pleasant task for a minister thereof. There have been all sorts of martyrs in Sussex for, as Mr. Connell observes, "the idea of toleration had hardly dawned on either Catholics or Protestants," and "both sides, when in power, made the teaching of erroneous doctrine an offence punishable by law; they only differed as to what constituted erroneous doctrine." Exactly. Yet Mr. Connell, feeling that this admission may involve more than at first might seem likely, hastens to add that "when a man could be hung for stealing a sheep, it seemed only fitting that anyone found guilty of heresy, which might infect the souls of many besides himself and cause their eternal damnation, should be punished with the most painful deaths." In a final and somewhat irrelevant chapter on "The Outlook for the Churches," we are told that the Church "must adapt itself to new times and new needs," and "refashion its formularies," but "amid a vastly expanded universe, the holy litanies of faith and hope and love may still be said." Only a sentence or two before this Mr. Connell refers to "the abandonment of the Church both by God and man" as being "possible"!

In a chapter on "Eighteenth Century Controversies," Mr. Connell notes that Paine was "a familiar figure" in Lewes, and must need add that "there is no ground at all for speaking of Paine as an Atheist." Who, except Christians, ever did? But, as Mr. J. M. Robertson observes in his introduction to *The Age of Reason*, anti-Atheist as he was, it is from Atheists ever since that Paine has received most respect and recognition. Paine, who was only in Lewes for a few years (1768-74), when he was excise officer there, is said by Mr. Connell to have had "the root of the matter (*i.e.*, religion) in him," and in evidence thereof quotes from a passage that suits his argument. But what the clergy of that time thought of Paine and said of him does not suggest that they counted him among the faithful. The Rev. John Riland, Rector of Sutton Coldfield, wrote a reply to Paine's *Rights of Man*, entitled *The Rights of God*. (1792). It was addressed to "the gentlemen who meet at the Crown and Anchor Tavern in London as an Association for preserving liberty and property, and against republicans and levellers." It begins catechistically as follows:—

Have men rights? They have. And has not the great God? Surely he has. And which are prior? His, doubtless. Which should be heard first, the Creator or the creature? Certainly not the latter, but the former. *Then let him be heard.* (Italics ours.) Is it not as rational as fair that the first in wisdom should be the first in speaking, and in claiming? Man may mistake the case; God cannot. Man may add where he should diminish, diminish where he should add, alter what he should leave unaltered, and leave worse what he found better. Not so his Maker.

We doubt not that Mr. Connell will think that Mr. Riland was, like the martyrs of Mary and Elizabeth respectively, a victim of his times, but we would most respectfully call his attention to the fact that it is not religion, but knowledge and humanistic progress, that has made him blush as he details the horrible deeds perpetrated in the name of his God, and snatches into the precarious defence of Christianity an isolated fragment from Paine.

One of our readers sends the following note which he saw at the recent Faraday exhibition, and which dealt with an invitation to attend the meetings of the Davenport Brothers.

I am obliged by your courteous invitation, but really I have been so disappointed by your "manifestations" to which my notice has at different times been called, that I am not encouraged to give any more attention to them; and therefore leave those to which you refer in the hands of Professors of legerdemain. If spirit communications not utterly worthless should start into activity, I will trust the Spirits to find out for themselves how they can move my attention. I am tired of them.

The end of the letter seems to "touch the spot." If the spirit world actually exists, and if it can show no greater intelligence than Spiritualistic records supply then existence would seem to be doubly a mistake. A world made up wholly of parsons and politicians could show nothing worse.

The Universality of Religion.

"So far as I can judge from the immense mass of accessible evidence, we have to admit that the belief in spiritual beings appears among all low races with whom we have attained to thoroughly intimate acquaintance." (E. B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, i. 425).

THIS oft-quoted passage plays a rather prominent part nowadays in the "arguments" with which we are confronted by Christian or Theistic opponents, many of whom I sometimes fancy have read nothing else in Tylor. What they intend to imply, apparently, is that religious sentiment is something implanted in the mind or heart, that it supplies a universal need, and that it is useless to combat it. This appeal to universality is interesting. It is in marked contrast with the Christian attitude shown to Comparative Religion less than a century ago, when the Semitic system was held to contain the genesis of all religion, and Christianity to be its developed and final product. The evidence not only that everything fundamental in Christianity was derived from primitive superstitious beliefs, but that "the faith once delivered to the saints" was part and parcel of the common heritage of all the religions of redemption, and followed similar, if not identical lines of growth, caused unusual consternation in the orthodox camp. Even when the anthropologist's researches had to be treated with respect, Christians were ready with the answer that his inferences were purely speculative. To-day the poor heathen, whose religion and ritual were venerable before Christianity was born, becomes a welcome factor in popular apologetics and thus takes a noble revenge on the divine Teacher whose commission to his church to evangelize the world has won such notable triumphs in Europe—of course, by purely spiritual means.

Most of the broad outlines of the subject are now matters of general discussion by all who are seriously interested in it, though there must always be room for speculation concerning the mental condition of primitive man, and the processes by which his superstitious beliefs occurred to his imagination. Wundt (*Ethics*, i. 60) is in complete agreement with Tylor, and rejects offhand Lubbock's statement that there have existed savage races devoid of religion altogether. Lubbock, however, expressly states that the question is largely one of definition, that if religion is defined simply as the dread of some superior power it cannot be regarded even as peculiar to man. Spencer emphasizes strongly the common origin of all religions. In his *Principles of Sociology*, 1896 (iii. 36), he makes one of those quiet but incisive remarks that we meet with occasionally in his references to Christianity. He says that if the parallels which he cites between the

various religious beliefs and systems do not prove a common origin, then "appearances have been arranged for the purpose of misleading sincere inquirers, that they may be eternally damned for seeking the truth." Universality really forms a bulky chapter in the history of "Christian evidences."

It would require considerable space to enter upon a discussion of the various definitions of religion that have been given by anthropologists, or to trace the origin of belief in "spiritual beings." The question with which I am here concerned may be very simply stated. If the descent of the human race from a common stock, which in turn is sprung from lower types, is a fact, should we not expect man to react similarly to environment everywhere? The geocentric theory of astronomy and the attribution of disease to demonic possession were erroneous beliefs once universally held and are not extinct yet. In India, New Guinea, Mexico and elsewhere there are, or were within the memory of men still living, survivals of ghost-worship or sympathetic magic which have affinities in the religious beliefs current to England to-day. What is the "laying on of hands" at the ordination of priests but a survival of the primitive superstition that supernatural power could be transferred in this way?

All the old tribal religions, in spite of certain similarities in ceremonial, are local and exclusive. Later, as in Egypt and Israel, they are moulded by political, economic and other influences into a state religion or a theocracy with a unified ritual and priesthood. The settled conditions of agricultural life especially facilitated this process. A polytheism, especially an intensely humanistic polytheism, makes it comparatively easy to admit new gods into the pantheon. In the Græco-Roman period, which roughly coincides with the last century of the Roman Republic, and the first two centuries of the Empire, "the Orontes flowed into the Tiber," and Persia, Syria, Egypt and Greece, as well as the City itself, contributed something to form the nucleus of a system which was later to dominate every land bordering on the Mediterranean.

It would be interesting to trace the growth and influence of hierarchies from the time of the eighteenth dynasty in Egypt to the ecclesiastical organization of the Roman Catholic Church as it has existed since about the fourth century of our era. In proportion as some degree of cult-fusion is reached the hierarchy becomes better organized, in an agricultural community it has the custody of the calendar, it interprets sacred writings where these exist, and not only becomes peculiarly jealous of its privileges, but consolidates the power of religion generally. With these developments we approach the period of systematic theology, which is really classified ignorance just as science is classified knowledge. No modern student of Comparative Religion ever said that the hierarchy invented religion.

The further evolution to world-religions is a slow process and is not yet complete. The history of civilization, in the widest sense, is our only guide here and, applying this test, we may say that the process never can be complete in the sense of reaching a goal where a single religion shall finally prevail. What particular form of supernatural belief is to escape the inexorable penalty which every other has paid? Charles Bradlaugh said that no one ever sees a religion die. This is true, but in Christendom to-day we are witnessing a struggle which is more interesting than any death-bed scene. The ecclesiastical imperialism which had the way prepared for it by the magnificent organization of the old Roman Empire, and whose visible expression is called "the bride of Christ," to-day maintains its hold only upon the least cultured parts of Europe, and even there it is in a more or less precarious state.

In Russia, once the stronghold of the Orthodox Greek Church, the diminished influence of religion, however brought about, has resulted in the establishment of schools and the spread of secular education in every direction. What of our own "sturdy" Protestantism? This has followed mainly in the wake of Great Britain's political and economic evolution at home and her imperialistic expansion abroad. It is a type of Christianity which, in the twentieth century, is absolutely moribund, while in the countries where it has prevailed Roman Catholicism is making a little headway. It is not without significance that some leaders in both these camps are appealing for union in the face of a common enemy, and it would be well for English-speaking people to remember what they are too prone to forget—that Europe had an undivided Church for several centuries.

In his *Social Evolution* (1894) Benjamin Kidd put forward a claim on behalf of religion which to-day has only an historical interest. He tried to show that religion has a distinct survival value, and that its sanctions are ultra-rational. H. R. Marshall (*Instinct and Reason*, 1898, pp. 221-8, 333-8) criticizes Kidd, but emphasizes the survival value of religion. He holds that "a strong argument in favour of the instinctive nature of religious expression lies in its universality in man." But no writer of this school pretends to prove survival value except within a group, often antagonistic to another group, for certainly no early community had any clear conception of the unity of mankind. If, however, we are to determine the value of a religion by the success that it has met with in the world, then Buddhism must rank above Christianity, and Islam be at least highly estimated. Besides, one fact is common to the success or failure of all of them. Not only is religion enjoined on the vast mass of men and women from childhood, but, in proportion as man's mastery over nature is extended, the economic and cultural life tends to exclude all religious influences. That is why, as the soul-saving fraternity so bitterly complains, increasing numbers are growing up to-day who feel no need for religion of any sort. Lastly, in the history of civilization intellectual and moral factors cannot be put into water-tight compartments, but even if they are separated the revolt against religion is more moral than intellectual.

It is not possible here to notice at length the theory propounded by Professor G. Elliot Smith in *The Migrations of Early Culture* (1915), and a number of subsequent publications. According to this view, religion and the arts in the first place spread over the earth by a process of diffusion from one centre—Egypt. This hypothesis implies that there once existed races without religion of any kind. Writers of this school emphasize that mental inertia, not originality, has always been the outstanding characteristic of the vast mass of men and women. Still, it seems to me inconceivable that any primitive race was never troubled by dreams, disease, fears and other unpleasant experiences which it would try to "explain" and obviate. Nor is it certain, perhaps it is not probable in a very high degree, that Egyptian civilization is the oldest in the world.

A. D. McLAREN.

So long as thou art ignorant, be not ashamed to learn. Ignorance is the greatest of all infirmities; and when justified, the chiefest of all follies.—*Isaak Walton*.

In these days we fight for ideas, and newspapers are our fortresses.—*Heine*.

Idleness is more an infirmity of the mind than of the body.—*Rocheffoucauld*.

Substance and Behaviour.

(Concluded from page 668.)

ONE great bone of contention in contemporary philosophy centres round a significant fact in the behaviour of substance; *i.e.*, its creativity. Substance is creative—not of new substance—but of new arrangements of substance. Some of these arrangements fit into an important concept of science—emergence. They are usually known as emergent "novelties"; and around that expression is being waged a keen philosophical controversy, involving theories of Vitalism, Holism, Objective Idealism, Emergent Materialism, Emergent Neutralism, Emergent Mentalism, Mentalistic Neutralism and others less prominent (*cf.*, *Contemporary American Philosophy*, 1930, for a delightful assortment of individual idiosyncrasies).

There is more in the synthesis (the emerged "new") than is to be found in the factors, or conditions. Sugar is sweet, although its constituents: carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen are not; saccharinity has emerged. Similarly, on a more complex scale, life and mind have emerged. Is there a Life Force in action manifesting itself through material media? Is there a Holistic Factor at work pulling out the novelties from their conditions? Has Life dipped into matter, after having waited for matter to attain a certain stage of complexity (*e.g.*, protoplasm)? Does the quality of sweetness likewise dip into an organization of C, O, and H? Has Lloyd Morgan's Directive Activity been in operation, guiding the bits into synthesised wholes? Does the emerged novelty now take the lead in casual action, and introduce an independent type of causation? Is it the Universal Mind reaching out to the perfection of its being as taught by Hegel? Is it the effort of a living substance, on its journey to a located goal called Value?

All these theories are anti-materialistic and anti-scientific; and it behoves the Materialist to enter into the metaphysical fray, and establish a working theory in place of current, useless speculation. Am I then suggesting a metaphysical materialism? No; I am suggesting a scientific materialism with its metaphysical aspect; a theme on which with the editor's permission I should, later, like to enlarge. In renouncing metaphysical materialism, I wish to renounce neither Metaphysics, as I understand it, nor Materialism, as I understand it.

Much confusion surrounds the term "novelty." That which is new, created, relates to form, not to substance; hence I choose the expression "formal novelty"; the only sense wherein emergents are novel. They represent the manifestation, not of something transcendental—like a Vital Principle—but of what is latent in the conditions. They do not proceed "out of nothing"; but form a new serial arrangement of events.

The "higher" emergents, like life or mind, are analogous to the "lower," like water. With the emergence of the latter the conditions are totally absorbed into the result which, moreover, does not depart so widely from the nature of its conditions as to call for the erection of another class-concept; *i.e.*, it is material like H. and O. This, however, is not the only mode of emergence. Mental facts, like thoughts, emerge and are equally susceptible to deterministic interpretation.

Let us suppose that the conditioning factors of a thought are: material objects, ether waves, sense-organs, retained impressions, cerebral metabolism. (These factors, of course, are themselves capable of analysis for none is ultimate). Such factors are not, like H. and O. taken up into the emergent—a mental state—but by the process of coming together—not in

the manner of a blend or combination, but rather in the manner of reciprocal arrangement in space-time—a latent function is released, and focussed at a particular place (say) in the cortex. A new eventual series is originated; without any addition to the stuff of the universe. The newcomer, the “novelty,” departs so widely from the nature of matter, that another category—mind—is occasioned; bringing in its train an extension of scientific activity; *i.e.*, psychology, necessitating also an extension in terminology.

Mental events, unlike material, would seem to “protrude” somewhat from their conditions; the motive for Spiritualists hankering after scientific proof of their complete independence. These mental events, unlike water, do not exhaust or assimilate the aggregate of their factors; they rather pertain to a focus. Mental facts then become threads in the universal web of causation, *i.e.*, mental acts can affect matter; but not before they have been themselves conditioned by matter.

In defining mind we are forced to use a derivative of the original word, and say that it is a collective name for mental facts evinced in animal behaviour. A mental state is simply a brute fact which has to be given a name, just as the emergent from H₂ and O is named “water.” It can be analysed scientifically, but must be described by language; for description and analysis tells the same. Analysis tells how it comes: description says what it is.

As might be expected, mental events are less permanent than material ones; they are more fleeting, not so readily amenable to scientific treatment, more complex; further, shall we say, from the core of substance. A point that is to-day much overlooked is the opposite of emergence; *viz.*, submergence. When the conditions giving the projected existence of mental events in an animal’s brain become disorganized, it mind is *submerged*; and the fund of energy, formerly at its disposal, is transformed. The “formal novelty” was born, and now it dies; in no other sense can death be taken to stand for something. There is no loss of substance; only a rearrangement which wipes out of existence a previous arrangement. Nothing takes the place of any substantial absentee; there is simply a re-formation in substance, fatal to a particular moral series therein.

Series of events, whether material, materio-mental, etc., will—on the view here taken—be manifestations (complications, rearrangements) of substance. Material events will not be so complex as mental ones, and so will lie nearer to pure being; *i.e.*, will approximate more closely to our concept of self-existence; they will be simpler, purer. It is doubtful whether substance can be conceived existing as absolutely simple; it is rather more likely that, by its inherent changeability, it always exists as arranged (formed, “phenomenalised,” as essence). Complexities come and go; but complexity (behaviour), at its lowest degree, will strike rock bottom and deserve the name simplicity. Substance is, then, behaviour in its simplest form; for behaviour is essential to substance. We can thus also think of an event in terms of the unit of behaviour. There is no opposition between noumenon and phenomenon. The first is substance, in its capacity as “common bedding” (James) for phenomena; the latter is substance in its renewal capacity; if a somewhat clumsy expression be permitted.

I have left on one side the metaphysical treatment of substance; having been concerned more with its behaviour. Rightly or wrongly, I consider that Materialism has, in metaphysics, a legitimate field of activity; and that the possession of that same field by other theories is an incentive to the Materialist to enter therein; precisely why and how must be left over for the present.

G. H. TAYLOR.

On Moralizing About Nature.

THE late Mr. Spurgeon, who was more of an authority upon public speaking than upon theology, and, in his time, gave some very sound and sensible hints to speakers (which may be found in his *Lectures to My Students*, a racy and readable book), also was in the habit of passing on to other people tips about books which, in his opinion, they ought to read. A book that was the subject of such a recommendation has suggested the theme of this paper. The book is *The Gospel in the Fields*, by the Rev. R. C. Fillingham. It was published more than thirty years ago, and its author, a controversial character, has been in the graveyard of his little Hertfordshire parish for over twenty years.

The object of this book, as defined by the author, was one which must have the approval of all decent people, whether pious or not. It was “to make the rural population amid which I labour see the delights and glories that lie at their very door; for no man can be a lover of Nature without being purified and raised. Such an insight adds grace and happiness to life.” It is, however, in an attempt to combine this rational teaching with orthodoxy, that this author, like so many before his time and since, went astray. For example, who but a clergyman could use the singing of birds that is the herald of spring to teach what he calls “a glorious song,” but what we must call a most horrible tenet, as follows:—

“If Christ my full discharge procured
And freely in my room endured,
The whole of wrath divine,
Payment God cannot twice demand,
First at my bleeding Surety’s hand
And then again at mine.”

Not only folk who live in the country, but even more the harrassed denizens of great cities, require to be reminded that:—

“The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending we lay waste our powers”;
and to enjoy, after an understanding manner, the delights of nature and of the countryside. Yet it must be remembered that there is that other nature “red in tooth and claw”; and that we can appreciate the freshness and fragrance of earth and air without by so doing abandoning our rational view as to what is called nature itself.

By way of illustrating this, and to show that imperviousness to nature is not the same thing as a failure to understand it and its moods, we will quote Mr. Fillingham again, and another, and very different author, Mr. Augustine Birrell—who, we may observe, once defended that gentleman in the Court of Arches. Mr. Fillingham wrote:—

I remember walking at night with a good fellow by the side of a transparent sea: nothing was heard but the eternal murmur of the restless waters on the pebbles; a full moon was making a path of heavenly splendour across the waves. It was a night of supernatural beauty—a night in whose silence all the voices of the universe were speaking to the soul. His complaint was that there was no band.

And now Mr. Birrell, who quotes, as does Mr. Fillingham, Wordsworth’s lines:—

“One impulse from a vernal wood,
May teach us more of man,
Of moral evil and of good
Than all the sages can.”

And (Mr. Birrell) proceeds:—

I have sometimes laid down Mr. Buckley’s immortal treatise of the Companies’ Acts and fled into a wood, and there listened to the cooing of the doves, and caught sight of the squirrels running to their sylvan homes; but I have sorrowfully to confess that as a student of moral evil I have learnt more from (let me say) the twenty-fifth section of the Companies’ Act, 1867, than from all the woods and forests I have ever visited at home and abroad.

Mr. Birrell, who never has any sectarian axe to grind and has a shrewd eye for virtue and for humbug in any

quarter, is in our opinion, a better authority on the place of natural beauty in life than Mr. Spurgeon, or, we may add, any other preacher, living or dead.

Even children have a better idea about what is to be learnt from nature, whether animate or inanimate, than most of the clergy. We have in a scrap book a record of a child's choice as its favourite from a book of modern nursery rhymes. The child, aged nine, chose this, called "The Yellow Cat."—

"In summer on the sunny wall the yellow cat and I
Sit quietly side by side and watch the clouds go sailing by:
I love his yellow velvet paws—I love to hear him sing,
But when it's dark and I'm in bed it's quite a different
thing.

For when it's dark from every house the cats of every size
Come creeping forth with angry tails and golden, gleaming
eyes,

They snarl and shriek and spit and swear—the yellow cat
and they;

I love the yellow cat, but still—I love him best by day."
To point the moral of this were a superfluity.

We know more about nature in these days than in those of Paley, and, for the matter of that, more than ever before. And the "more we know the more our wonder grows." We do not shut our eyes and dream of wonders we shall never see; we open our eyes, and if necessary help them with telescopes, microscopes or spectacles, and we behold wonders of which we never dreamed. It is knowledge, and not superstition, that fills life with meaning and awe. Read Sir William Watson's *Father of the Forest*, and you will find in it an inimitable testimony that the more we know of nature and of mankind the less room we must find for the moralisings about them dear to clerical and hymnological hearts and pens.

We cannot forbear to quote the first and final lines of that noble poem:—

"Old Emperor Yew, fantastic sire,
Girt with thy guard of dotard kings,—
What ages hast thou seen retire
Into the dust of alien things?
What mighty news hath stormed they shade,
Of armies perished, realms unmade?"

"The advent of that morn divine
When nations may as forests grow,
Wherein the oak hates not the pine,
Nor beeches wish the cedars woe,
But all, in their unlikeness, blend
Confederate to one golden end—

Beauty: the Vision whereunto,
In joy, with pantings, from afar,
Through sound and odour, form and hue,
And mind and clay, and worm and star—
Now touching goal, now backwards hurled—
Toils the indomitable world."

ALAN HANDSACRE.

Earth-bound.

THE Great Masters say
That life on earth has come from Mars,
And that one day,
Tired of our family jars,
It will go on to Mercury.
I trust I've made that plain;
I hope you see.

Listen again.
Life is now doing the third of seven rounds
(Oh, zounds!)

Upon the fourth of the planets seven
(Gracious Heaven!)
In the fourth of the Logos's seven chains
Of this, the fourth, Manvantara.
(Zing-boom! Tan-tan-tara!)

How much this fact explains.
All this may be quite true.
But what I want to know—like you—
Is whether I'll sleep warm this night,
And whether I shall eat, or have to draw
my belt more tight.

BAYARD SIMMONS.

"Converting the Heathen."

WE don't hear nearly so much about "converting the heathen" as we used to hear twenty or thirty years ago.

One principal reason for this is that Africa, that happy hunting ground of the missionary, is now pretty well apportioned among the French, English, Dutch and Belgians.

Most of the remainder of the so-called uncivilized world is under some sort of jurisdiction or "protectorate." So that, if we except a few score of hardy nomads—who refuse to let the "ruling races" lock a yoke around their necks, and tell them how much rubber or how many elephant tusks or mule ears they must bring in per capita, and how much tribute they are to deliver to the local over-lords for the privilege of breathing and keeping alive—we haven't many "heathens" left.

The missionary really functioned as a "paver of the way." The flag followed the missionary and trade followed the flag. And this seemed to be the main object of the altruistic missionary effort.

However, to an ordinary person—who gets a headache even from trying to comprehend the difference between the tweedle-dum and tweedle-dee of high church and low church episcopalianism, immersion and non-immersion Baptists, and the dogmas of the warring Christian sects—it is difficult to understand how the simple-minded Negro could possibly be converted to anything.

If he should become temporarily converted, by feed-bag or other logic, it is almost inconceivable that he would remain this way when the feed-bag is removed.

If he could possibly be made to comprehend the magnanimity, the humanism, the delightful spirit of camaraderie and brotherly love exemplified in our latest developments in poison gas, high explosive and submarine warfare, and the marvellous technic exhibited in bringing entire nations virtually to the point of starvation, he might be duly impressed with our sincerity and our earnestness.

Yet now it might be worth while considering whether the \$13,750,000 a year spent on "converting the heathen" could not be more profitably spent right here in America converting the thugs and head-hunters of our own fair land into something a little less tigerish or wolfish than these savages at present.

It might be even possible to instil a modicum of shame and decency into the beasts that turn machine-gun fire into a crowd of helpless children, although this is exceedingly doubtful.

However, in view of our present pressing need for some sort of conversion, it would seem only reasonable that we might let the Chinese and the Negroes get along for a few years without the 7,000 zealous missionaries now wasting valuable time and effort among these gentle savages. For they might then be available for missionary work in a land where such work might really count for something.

EDWARD ORLEANS in the *New York Mirror*.

Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SOCIALISM AND FREETHOUGHT.

SIR,—I am loth to start a destructive political hare through the fertile fields of the *Freethinker*. But, supporting your recent article, and replying to Mr. P. Lewis, I will say just this. He asks you (irrelevantly) "what would you say if Catholics argued that all non-Catholics must be Lutherans?" I ask Mr. Lewis, "must all Socialists be members of the S.P.G.B.?" Every member of the Labour Party (including those affiliated *en bloc* to it from the T.U.C., who pay a political levy), assents to its constitution, the first clause of which is the definition of Socialism most generally and accurately used.

CANDIDUS,

FREETHOUGHT AND IDEAS.

SIR,—Mr. Clayton appears to think that there is an advantage in having Freethought ideas disseminated by Dean Inge and Bishop Barnes. One hopes that your article on "Religion and Science" will have disturbed this illusion of his. One may also be allowed to suggest that the aforesaid advantage may be rather a mixed blessing. Do Freethought ideas gain anything by reaching the public at second-hand, and after being soiled and distorted by an admixture of Christian thought and ways of thinking? After all, second-hand goods are generally recognized as having had their value depreciated by at least 50 per cent. May not the same be said of second-hand Freethought ideas?

Again, the dissemination of second-hand Freethought ideas may probably serve to keep some men and women within the Church; whereas they might otherwise have become dissatisfied with the genuine Christian notions and have eventually discovered Freethought ideas in their original purity. D.P.S.

Obituary.

JOSEPH WARWICK.

It is with much regret that we have to record the death of Joseph Warwick, a member of the Manchester Branch N.S.S., which occurred on October 1. A loyal supporter of his branch, and a warm-hearted comrade, his loss will be keenly felt in local Freethought circles. The funeral took place at the Southern Cemetery on Monday, October 5, where his wish for a Secular Burial was duly honoured. Councillor George Hall was present as the representative of the Manchester Branch N.S.S.—R.H.R.

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LONDON.

OUTDOOR.

FULHAM AND CHELSEA BRANCH N.S.S. (corner of Shorrolds Road, North End Road) : Saturday, at 7.30, Messrs. E. Bryant and C. Tuson. *Freethinkers* on sale.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (White Stone Pond, Hampstead, near the Tube Station) : 11.30 a.m., Mr. L. Ebury.

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.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park) : 12.0, Mr. B. A. Le Maine; at 3.30, and 6.30, Messrs. Bryant, Hyatt, McLaren, Tuson and Wood; Wednesday, at 7.30, Messrs. Tuson and Wood; Friday, at 7.30, Messrs. McLaren and 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, Finchley Road, N.W.8, near Marlborough Road Station) : 11.15, Mr. J. Hutton Hynd—"Responsibility and the Artistic Temperament."

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, Mr. F. V. Fisher—"Bible Values."

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Oliver Goldsmith School, Peckham Road) : 7.0, Dr. C. W. Saleeby—"How to Live Through the Winter."

STUDY CIRCLE (N.S.S. Office, 62 Farringdon Street, E.C.4) : Monday, October 26, at 8.0 p.m., Mr. F. P. Corrigan will open a discussion on "The Psychological Aspect of Religion."

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1) : 11.0, W. Stephen Sanders, M.P.—"Can We Solve the World's Economic Problem?"

THE CONWAY DISCUSSION CIRCLE (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1) : Tuesday, October 27, at 7.0, Mrs. Dora Russell—"Freethought for Women and Children."

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. E. Ratcliffe—"If I Were God."

COUNTRY.

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.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.—Wednesday, October 28, at 8.0—Mr. J. T. Brighton.

SEAHAM HARBOUR.—Saturday, October 24, at 7.0—Mr. J. T. Brighton.

SUNDERLAND.—Sunday, October 25, at 7.0—Mr. J. T. Brighton.

INDOOR.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N.S.S.—Shakespeare Room, Edmund Street, Birmingham, Thursday, October 29, at 7.30, Mr. C. Smith—"Holiday Reminiscences."

EAST LANCASHIRE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION (28 Bridge Street, Burnley) : 2.30, Will Sisson (Bolton)—"Genesis to Jeans." Questions and discussion. All welcome.

GLASGOW BRANCH N.S.S. (City Hall, Albion Street, No. 2 Room) : 11.30, Mr. G. Whitehead (London)—"The Rights of Animals." 6.30, "Man and Superman."

LIVERPOOL (Merseyside BRANCH N.S.S. (Transport Buildings, 41 Islington, Liverpool, entrance Christian Street) : 7.0, Dr. C. H. Ross Carmichael (Liverpool).

LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate) : 6.30, Mr. Chapman Cohen, President N.S.S.—"The Disease that Kills Religion."

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE BRANCH (Socialist Club, Arcade, Pilgrim Street) : 3.0, Members Meeting.

PAISLEY BRANCH N.S.S. (Baker's Hall, 5 Forbes Place) : 7.30; Mr. W. Allan—A Lecture.

PLYMOUTH BRANCH N.S.S. (Plymouth Chambers, Drake Circus Hall No. 5) : 7.0, Mr. E. Lynden, Junr.—"Woman and Her Emancipation."

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