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

Views and Opinions.

The Great Taboo.

THERE is nothing very new to be said at the moment about the Sunday Entertainments Bill. Naturally it passed its second reading. It was a religious issue, and we have it on the highest authority that whenever a religious question is before the House it shows its real character and appears at its highest. From that point of view the voting, and the voters, are instructive. On the last occasion, April 13, 235 voted for the second reading and 217 against. On this occasion, May 26, 237 voted for and 61 against. The first was a private members' Bill, and members were left free to vote as their convictions, or their sense of self-interest, prompted them. On the second occasion it was a Government measure, and voting against orders meant running the risk of losing a chance of promotion or of being appointed to some political post, or forfeiting financial assistance from party funds. Even then more than half the House did not vote. Between offending voters in the constituencies, and offending the holders of the purse and of appointments, half the members simply sat still.

But the character of some of the support given the Bill is illuminating. It was introduced by Sir Herbert Samuel, who in April announced that he was opposed to Sunday opening. Being a Jew he was naturally solicitous for the sanctity of Sunday. This time he actually introduced the Bill. Sir Thomas Inskip, who is the Attorney-General (a post which with fees and salary yields about twenty thousand a year) and is also President of the Lord's Day Observance Society, opposed the Bill in April. This time he supported it. Not merely that, but while in the House he votes for the opening of Cinemas on Sunday, his Society, presumably with his sanction, pays for full page advertisements in religious papers warning the public that the passing of the measure will undermine the religion and morality of the British people and bring the country to ruin. In April he jeered at the Bill as presenting local option in its

worst aspect, and called it a mere "face-saving" provision. In May he supports local option in the Bill unchanged. In April he warned the House that if Cinemas were open on Sunday we should lose one of the few glimpses of the "heavenly City" we had. In May he votes for the removal of that glimpse of heaven. Well, Henri IV. said that France was worth a Mass. Probably Sir Thomas Inskip thinks the Attorney-Generalship worth a glimpse of the heavenly city. So we get our first glance at the House of Commons at its best. We also see the elevating influence exerted when religion is on the carpet. The honesty, the consistency, the spirit of self-sacrifice generated is striking.

* * *

Cant About Sunday.

Sir Herbert Samuel moved the second reading and would have contributed to the gaiety of the House, if a keen sense of humour had been one of its characteristics. He found a proof of the religious quality of the nation in the fact that 100,000 people sang "Abide with me," before a Football match. The stupidity was rather too elaborate to be genuine, for Sir Herbert must know that in this massed singing the crowd would have been just as ready to sing "Tipperary," or "Knocked 'em in the Old Kent Road." He dreaded the introduction of the Continental Sunday in this country, when, as a Jew, he is quite aware that if all were of his religion the Sunday would disappear. Sunday must be preserved because if people are to rest, "the individual can only rest fully if all the nation rested at the same time." That is a very remarkable piece of social psychology, and if true it means that many thousands of Sir Herbert's co-religionists never rest at all, for their day of rest is Saturday, when the remainder of the nation is hard at work. But the preachment is simply not true. If there is to be any rest at all on any day in the week many others *must* work. All engaged in running trams, busses, charabancs, trains, many engaged in the refreshment business, those seeing to various social services, all have to be at work if there is to be real rest for the majority of the people. Above all the very Bill which Sir Herbert was so ingeniously supporting provides for the labour of some and the rest of all by stipulating that none engaged in the film industry shall work more than six days per week. Why cannot that principle be applied all round?

Sir Herbert's law is as shaky as is his philosophy of rest. In his eagerness to make the Bill appear as an advance on the existing state of things he said that at present museums, picture galleries, botanical gardens and aquariums were all of them under the Sunday Observance Act. These would now be placed outside the Act as would be the case with concerts. But it is simply not the case that concerts, museums, gardens, or entertainments in general were ever pro-

hibited by the 1781 Act. These were all perfectly legal so long as there was no charge for admission. It was the payment for admission that made them illegal, and nothing else. It was this that made the most harmless or the most educational lecture on Sunday illegal, so long as a charge was made for admission. Surely the well-paid Attorney-General might have better instructed Sir Herbert in this respect. After that his remark that all agreed that one day's rest in seven should be guaranteed the working class was a mere throwing of dust in the eyes of his audience. No one disputes this; even fixing a day would rouse no violent opposition. It is surrounding the day with a number of prohibitions based on ancient religious taboos that is the cause of all the trouble.

* * *

Is it a Compromise.

A good deal was said by both the Home Secretary and other defenders of the Bill about this being a compromise measure. (I was sorry to see the same view taken by Professor Harold Laski in the *Daily Herald*). But there was no compromise whatever. Look at the position. The Sunday Observance Act made every place for which admission was charged illegal. In London and other places Cinemas had opened in spite of the law, and when its illegality was made clear the Government had to connive at it or make Sunday opening legal. Now it would have been impossible for the Government to have closed all Cinemas in London. The public simply would not have tolerated a return to the old state of things. And the example of London would have spread still further to the provinces. In a few years the Sunday Act would have become a dead letter, and its formal repeal would have followed. It was because the Lord's Day Observance Society saw this position that it never took steps to bring Cinema proprietors before the Courts. What, then, is this so-called compromise? The Government says to London and to other places where Sunday entertainments are carried on:—

You may keep on as you are going, because we cannot stop you. We will not say to other places they shall not have Cinemas also, that would be too glaring an anomaly; but we will make it as difficult as possible for others to share what you have. Further, for opening on Sunday you have been asked to give a portion of the profits made on Sunday. We will make this confiscation of profits legal, and will make it so that, not a part of your profits, but all of them may be legally confiscated. In this way there will be every inducement for you not to open at all. And we extend this privilege of being the victims of legal robbery to Cinemas only, which in our judgment is the lowest form of dramatic entertainment. Theatres must remain closed.

And this is what they have the impudence to call a compromise! Some people are given what cannot be taken from them, and under conditions that make it as hard as possible for them to accept. It has saved for the time being the repeal of the Sunday Observance Act, and has reaffirmed, in as strong a way as circumstances permit, the religious sanctity of Sunday. The Sabbatarian gets all it is possible for him to get in the shape of safeguarding his foolish taboo, the reformer has new obstacles placed in the way of his making Sunday a day of real rest and of rational entertainment. The Sunday Entertainments Bill is a victory for Sabbatarianism as complete as it could hope to get, and far greater than it hoped to get a few years ago.

* * *

Get to Work.

We have every reason for believing that it was the *Freethinker's* criticism of the inclusion of Sunday lectures as among the things that were to be placed

under licence which led to the withdrawing of "debates" from the new Bill. That was too much for even the present House of Commons to stand. It is left for us now to make the best educative use we can of the present situation. The broadening of Sunday freedom may be counted as mainly the outcome of the gradual breaking down of theological belief during the past two or three generations. That is, again, mainly the work of Freethought, and largely the work of popular Freethought propaganda. There is now a chance for every reader of this paper to make something of the present situation. As stated last week, I have written a four-page leaflet criticizing the Sunday Entertainments Bill, and pointing out its real nature. During the next week or two, and while the Bill is before the country, this leaflet, which is the only straightforward criticism of the Bill that the country will see, should be circulated as widely as possible. A first printing of 100,000 is being distributed, and by the time this issue of the *Freethinker* is in the hands of its readers a second printing, will, I expect, be ready. These leaflets are being sent out at the nominal price of 5s. per 1,000, post free. This is about half the cost of printing, but it is a propagandist effort, and they are likely to be distributed more carefully in this way than in any other.

It must not be forgotten that there is a considerable measure of opposition to the Bill, from those who see its dangerous character in preventing sane legislation, as well as from Sabbatarians. If this opposition can be encouraged and strengthened while the Bill is in Committee, and by the time it comes again before the House for a second reading, we may see things. What is clear to my mind is that the passing of this Bill will make it much more difficult to wipe out the Sabbatarian laws, and strengthen the principle of basing legislation on religious beliefs. We must do what we can, and at once, to kill this miserable thing, or if we fail, create a state of public opinion that will move in the direction which all genuine reformers desire.

What I want is for every reader who is interested, and who appreciates the educational opportunity of creating a sound public opinion on the subject, to send for at least 1,000 copies. Those who cannot undertake the distribution personally can send along their contributions and we will see that they are properly used. If we seize the occasion there ought to be at least a quarter of a million copies distributed during the next fortnight. Members of Parliament are only to be educated from the outside. What they do will depend upon the kind of strength of the public opinion they have to face. If we do what we ought and what we can we can strike a shrewd blow at one of the most miserable superstitions of our time.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

A TRIAL OF ORTHODOXY.

THE clinging children at their mother's knee
Slain; and the sire and kindred one by one
Flayed or hewn piecemeal; and things nameless done,
Not to be told: while impertubably
The nation's gaze, where Rhine unto the sea,
Where Seine and Danube, Thames and Tiber run,
And where great armies glitter in the sun,
And great Kings rule, and man is boasted free!
What wonder if yon torn and naked throng
Should doubt a Heaven that seems to wink and nod,
And having moaned at noontide, "Lord, how long?"
Should cry, "Where hidest Thou?" at evenfall,
At midnight "Is he deaf and blind, our God?"
And ere day dawn, "Is He indeed at all?"

Sir William Watson.

Guilt-Edged Insecurity.

"The difference between a theatre and a church is that you pay to go in one and pay to get out of the other."—Mark Twain.

"The services of the clergy are imaginary, and their payment should be of the same description."

G. W. Foote.

"Solemnity is of the essence of imposture."

Shaftesbury.

SWIFT said that the clerical profession was "nothing but a trade." As Dean of a Christian cathedral, he was in a position to know. That the Anglican Church alone should own property worth £200,000,000 to-day is a further proof that the business is still a successful one. For, as Voltaire has reminded us, "England has but one sauce, but a hundred religions," and this Anglican Church represents but a single brand of superstition out of a collection ranging from Catholicism to Christadelphianism and Mormonism.

Times are bad, however, and soothsayers are affected equally with manufacturers of patent medicines and bookmakers. Farmers have difficulty in paying tithes; business men find it hard to pay Church rates; and the average churchgoer has had to reduce his offering. So the Anglican Church authorities are getting apprehensive lest the suckers in the pews should imitate the schoolboys and substitute brace-buttons in the alms-bag instead of real money, a consummation devoutly to be avoided.

Using up-to-date business methods, the Anglican Church Authorities appointed a Commission in 1929 to find out how much the innocents in the pews gave to their Church, and, after three years, the report has been published. With tears in their pens, they report that the average churchgoer values his immortal soul at thirteen pence weekly, for that is the amount he contributes. This is truly appalling, for, surely, a Christian should estimate his salvation at a higher rate than the price of an all-day tram ticket, the cost of a cinema seat, or a slab of chocolate.

Many years ago, Mark Twain, so the story goes, injured his knee when falling from a train, and claimed £30,000 damages from the railway company. A representative called on him and pointed out that it was a lot of money for a knee-cap, and, whilst they recognized that Mark Twain was an author of world-wide repute, a knee still remained a part of a limb. Twain replied that the claim was really £5,000 for the knee, and £25,000 for his immortal soul. "But," protested the railway agent, "we have nothing to do with that." "I must insist," said Twain, "for, when my knee struck your platform my language was so profane that I imperilled my soul, and I value my eternal salvation at £25,000."

Now Mark Twain was far from being a religious man, so the surprise is all the greater that the average Christian should value his salvation at so low a figure. For, kindly note, thirteen pence is the average contribution. Actual donations vary very considerably. Country gentlemen give as much as half a crown, but their wives only shell out a bob. Lawyers, being more astute, fine themselves two shillings, and let their wives off with a humble sixpence. But one who ought to be struck by lightning, or some other signal mark of the divine displeasure, is the British working-man, who, when in affluence gives a paltry penny, or even a halfpenny, and when stony stays away altogether. Look at the risk this Church of Christ runs from this fellow. "A beggarly denarius," as Shakespeare calls it. If this sort of thing goes on, the sons-of-god will be like the drapers, and conduct much of their business in farthings.

A little child is to lead the dear, devoted clergy

out of this awful financial morass. One of the recommendations of this Church Assembly Commission is that children should have their own pocket money, and that the priests should get after them on pay-day, before they have time to dissipate their cash on sweets and the pictures, and remind them that true happiness consists in giving to greedy people and going without yourself. And, presumably to add that those who give the most will have a specially large-sized gilt harp when they reach the golden streets of heaven. Of course, the recommendation is not phrased so bluntly, for the innocence of childhood should be respected on paper, if not in actual practice. But that is the gist of the suggestion, which is enough to make a bronze statue blush with shame and indignation.

Assuming that the income of the average Christian churchgoer is the same as the average per head of the population generally, which has been calculated at a minimum of £50, a year, the Church Assembly Commissioners point out that the man in the pew contributes one seventeenth of his income to the alms-dish. The report describes this contribution as "lamentably small." You can always trust priests to look a gift-horse in the mouth. Lamentably small, indeed! Do these worthies expect the pious Englishman to commit hari-kari at the mere word of command? That this Church Assembly Commission should even suggest that the paltry pocket-money of innocent children should be ear-marked for their own sorry trade proves to what desperate shifts these so-called champions of Christendom are reduced. Happily, they have nullified the effect of their own soberly-worded reports by admitting that priests belong, and have always belonged to the "We want your money" brigade. Salvation, indeed! Priestcraft has never represented anything but guilt-edged insecurity. In the Ages of Faith these priests insisted on a tenth of a farmer's produce, levied church rates, and bullied testators on the death-bed. After many centuries of their boasted Christian civilization the average income of the average man is £50 yearly, and the so-called Church of England holds property worth £200,000,000, the Bench of Bishops shares £250,000 annually, and wields legislative power in the interests of a powerful clerical caste, whose spiritual home is in the Middle Ages. The purely business side of Christianity, however, is seen clearest in the gangster methods now adopted to raise revenue for a religion alleged, ironically, to be without money and without price. For this Church of Christ is not a benevolent, old grandmother, but a very greedy wolf with wide-open jaws.

MIMNERMUS.

Not for the first time we borrow, with no comment but a word of acknowledgment, from the learned and witty writer of "At Random," in the *Observer*. This from a recent issue:—

The anti-Darwin campaign is still going ahead in America. A journal of Little Rock, Ark., bursts into poetry:—

Evolution, God now mocketh,
Capp'd and gown'd she boldly walketh,
But unmasked she quickly stalketh,
Back to Hell's deep, gloomy pit for evermore.

And an advertisement of a Baptist service ("Evolution: The Fake Science") at Minnesota adds the special attraction:—

Hear little Dorothy Johnson sing "The Monkey is No Relation of Mine."
We take her word for it; but we cannot be so sure about the author of the song.

On Hebrew and Kindred Matters.

(Continued from page 310.)

THE result of examining many articles and books on the Hebrew language has led me to the following conclusions: (1) Hebrew was possibly the language of Abraham. (2) If not of Abraham, it was possibly the language of the Israelites in Egypt. (3) If not of these particular Israelites, then possibly of those who invaded the land flowing with milk and honey. (4) If not brought in by the invaders, then Hebrew was quite possibly the language of the original inhabitants of Canaan. (5) If not of the whole of Canaan, it was quite possibly a dialect of one of its provinces. (6) One "authority" (Luzzato) says Hebrew was derived from Aramaic, another (Oldhausen) says it was derived from Arabic. Still another (Hasting's *Dictionary*) says it is but a vulgar dialect of Arabic. (7) Nearly all "authorities" say Hebrew was dead as a spoken language soon after the Babylonian exile. (8) But one (Dr. Giles) claims it to have been spoken right up to the time of the Crucifixion. Proof—the inscription on the Cross, in Hebrew!

There are many other conclusions equally as interesting, equally as conjectural and equally as futile; but of real evidence, that Biblical Hebrew was actually spoken, absolutely none. "The origin of Hebrew is lost in obscurity," says the *Encyclopedia Biblica*. "To construct an historical sketch of the origin and development of the Hebrew language is a task beset with much difficulty . . . obviously the question does not admit of a clear and ready solution," says the *Catholic Encyclopedia*.

"The material for forming a judgment on Hebrew is itself scanty and inadequate," says the latest edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*.

"The limited literature preserved in the Bible," says the *Jewish Encyclopedia*, "and the nature of most of its books, which are the products of schools rather than of individuals, as well as the uncertainty as to the time and place of their composition, make the historical tracing of the development of Biblical Hebrew a hazardous undertaking . . . loan words from Assyrian and Egyptian, from the languages of India and Persia and perhaps from Greek are necessarily found."

"Hebrew as it appears in the Old Testament," says the *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, "is in a state of decadence, corresponding to the present position of spoken Arabic . . . One of the most remarkable facts connected with the Hebrew of the Old Testament is that, although that literature extends through a period of 1,000 years, there is almost no difference between the language of the oldest parts and that of the newest . . . The Babylonian exile sounded the death knell of the Hebrew language. Old Hebrew became a literary and sacred tongue, the language of everyday life being probably Aramaic."

These passages show none of that glib certainty about Hebrew being a spoken language which is ascribed to the greatest philologists of the world. On the contrary, the articles from which they are culled are full of the greatest uncertainty about the matter, their writers, obviously having an uneasy feeling that the proper description of their efforts to elucidate the mystery can be summed up in one word, "conjecture." And the conjecture is not based on facts but on more conjecture.

There are, however, some facts which might help us in our enquiry and the first is the discovery of the Tel el Amarna tablets. These tablets were found in a box or jar by some fellaheen in Tel el Amarna. They are part of the archives of the Kings

Amenophis III and IV, and their correspondence with the Kings of Asia and the Governors of Palestine under Egyptian rule. The writing on these tablets is known as Babylonian Cuneiform, and here and there are glosses in the Phœnician (sometimes, but quite erroneously called "old" Hebrew) language. These tablets belong to the eighteenth dynasty—the supposed time of Israel in Egypt. Whatever then the spoken languages or dialects may have been in Palestine, the language for *correspondence* or the literary language, must have been Babylonian. In other words, the one fact emerging from this discovery is the proof that Babylonian was the *understood* language of the time over vast territories. Still another find, later than the Tel el Amarna tablets, also in Babylonian Cuneiform, was a series of letters and edicts concerning the Amorites. These were discovered in Boghaz Keni in Asia Minor. They are supposed to be of the time of Moses. Many other Cuneiform tablets have been found—some at Gezer, and they are actually placed in the seventh century B.C. And one of the excavators in Palestine, Dr. Sellin, says: "In the already extensive excavations which have been carried on in Palestine, no document has ever been found in any except in Babylonian writing. As for the Phœnician or old Hebrew writing, it cannot be asserted with certainty that it existed before the ninth century."

It would be interesting to hear what the great philologists have to say about that quotation. But whatever they said or thought, the fact remains that at least up to the ninth century B.C., the only language understood in Palestine or all over Canaan was not Hebrew, but Babylonian.

The Moabite Stone is a favourite argument brought against this hypothesis. The inscription written on it is in a Moabitish dialect and in Phœnician characters. It is quite possible that side by side with Babylonian Cuneiform writing which was done on wet clay or something like it with a stylus, there grew up some kind of writing coming from the Phœnicians which could be done on papyrus. Nobody knows where the Phœnicians received their script from but Sir Arthur Evans, the great authority on Crete, claims it to have been derived from a Minoan source. It is also fairly certain that many localities had their own *patois* or dialects and Moabite was one. It was not Hebrew, biblical Hebrew, though it is obvious that Hebrew borrowed some of its vocabulary from it, as it did from other languages.

Another inscription which has come down to us is the Siloam, found at Jerusalem and supposed to have been made at the time of Hezekiah. It also is written in Phœnician characters, but according to the *Jewish Encyclopedia* the language is "pure Hebrew"—although it is admitted that at least one word occurs which is not in the Old Testament. The date given for the Moabite Stone is about 700 B.C., and most authorities give the same date for the Siloam inscription which describes the digging of a rock—acqueduct. Mr. Henry Harper, in the *Bible and Modern Discoveries* is very elated about it and quotes Professor Sayce as saying the characters are even older than the Moabite Stone. The *Jewish Encyclopedia*, which naturally would be far more elated than Mr. Harper or Professor Sayce, dwells on neither of these two inscriptions with quite the same enthusiasm. It does not hesitate to point out that some "authorities" have doubted the authenticity of both inscriptions. The same kind of characters on the Siloam inscription are found on inscriptions which are obviously of the date of the Maccabees, that is about 150 B.C., and it admits the date anyway is uncertain and even points out that "it has been assumed that the date of the digging (described in the inscription) lies within the

period of the Maccabees," of course, without agreeing with the assumption.

Both inscriptions are of the most dubious authority and do not prove that Biblical Hebrew was ever spoken in Palestine or elsewhere. The most that can be said for them is that they have words which can be found in Hebrew which, as has been pointed out, "borrowed" extensively from the languages surrounding it. But a much more important discovery than the Tel el Amarna tablets, is the discovery of the Elephantine papyri. They cover a period of about 80 years, and are dated about the year 500 B.C. They were written by a small colony of Jewish settlers in South Egypt and are of various kinds, many private and public letters, and one addressed to the Governor of Judah regarding a temple destroyed by the Egyptians. Now the remarkable fact about these documents is that though coming from Jews, they are written in Aramaic, and Prof. Sachau, who has edited most of them says: "I have searched every bit, every fragment from Elephantine in the hope of finding something Hebrew, but in vain. The Jewish colony had Hebrew names, but everything written was Aramaic." These Elephantine papyri prove more than anything else in the world that the language, both the literary and spoken language of Canaan was then Aramaic. The Jews, living in the Egyptian colony, must have brought it with them, and as the writings cover many things, legal deeds as well as descriptions of everyday life, we can say with certainty and not conjecture that Aramaic was the language of the Jews in the fifth century B.C.—though again it must be pointed out that there may have been certain dialects in different districts which were not Aramaic but a kind of pronounced mixture of many languages and dialects.

Nobody, of course, knows who first spoke Aramaic. Nobody knows how or where it originated. But many kinds of inscriptions have been found all written in Aramaic, which was even used by Assyrian Kings as well as their own language. Thus as far as any discovery of Biblical Hebrew goes, the result has been absolutely negative. On the other hand, we are almost certain that Babylonian Cuneiform first, and later Aramaic were the languages of Canaan. No Biblical Hebrew manuscript has come down to us in what is wrongly called old Hebrew and no evidence of any kind has (so far as I've been able to gather) been brought forward showing when and where the kind of Hebrew found in the Old Testament was ever spoken.

The Samaritan Pentateuch is the only document which has come down to us of the Old Testament (except some fragments in Aramaic) written in a different script from that of the square Hebrew. Its origin is quite unknown. Its script looks like Phœnician but has many variations. Most authorities place it somewhere about 300 B.C., by which time the Old Testament was certainly shaping itself into something like its present form. But critics have not dealt with the remarkable transition from whatever script was originally used in putting down the old stories quite as fully as they should have done. Who invented the square Hebrew character? When was it invented? Why was the change (if any) made? I shall deal with these questions in the next article.

H. CUTNER.

(To be concluded.)

Criminals, and Others.

THE recent doings at Dartmoor have brought to the fore the problem of how criminals should be treated. Nobody really supposes that prison confinement strikes at the roots of crime; it merely throws out a bargain to criminals at large, and bottles up the tendencies of those within its walls.

Slowly but surely the Church is being forced to recognize that criminals are really mental invalids who need skilled medical treatment. Success will attend our efforts when we aim, not at punishing, nor at pampering, but at understanding, the criminal. It is customary for those casually interested in criminology to group themselves into two opposing camps, which we will call the Punishers and the Pamperers. Both fail. The Punishers by issuing a bargain, stimulate the wits of criminals, and thus provide the conditions for the survival of the "fitter" among them (*i.e.*, the more criminal); meanwhile incurring the expenses of their board-residence. The Pamperers like to pose as overflowing with the milk of human kindness, in return for which, when the supply runs dry, they usually get a "fourpenny one" good and hard.

Then comes the scientific criminologist. He attacks the problem in quite a different manner. "This old-timer has something wrong with his cerebral metabolism"; "here is a case of gland atrophy," "here one of pathology"; "here are chemical perversities in the blood stream"; "here, physiological disorder"; "this lag should be dieted"; "this one wants inculcating," etc. The Church has stood in the way of this with its absurd doctrine of "free" will, which pictures a "soul" being confronted with alternatives, and regardless of history, choosing "Right" or "Wrong."

In a scientific treatment of crime there will be no fundamental distinction between physical and mental illness. And surely there are people walking the streets who, on account of their physical illness, are a far greater menace to society than convicts who are (presumably) safely locked up out of everybody's way. In treating physical and mental invalids in the same category it may become necessary to ask ourselves this question: Assuming that treatment is eventually successful, would the results be commensurate with the time, money, and energy devoted to the patient, or would it be advantageous to society and to the patient himself if he were placed in a lethal chamber? In other words, we should determine the point at which a person is fit to die (*e.g.*, being without friends, without zest, and without social utility), and then ask, why preserve what is fit to die?

What the criminal is really doing is asserting his own code of behaviour against that of his neighbours. Luck does not favour him, however. The important fact against him is that most of us are, at least for legal purposes, honest. We are honest, either as a matter of safety (cowardice), or as a matter of policy (craft), or as a matter of training (education). And so the criminal finds himself opposed to the many. In lower animals the thief, the aggressor, is not so unfortunate. The herd looks on while he battles for his desires. And lower still we find he is universal, aggression being the condition of existence: we cannot for instance think of insectivorous animals apart from insect-devouring.

Evolution has been all against the criminal. Evolution makes for gregarity, and hence for social code. The criminal is essentially anti-social. Societies emerged when mutual aggressors discovered that they had more to gain by the replacement of individual by co-operative aggressiveness.

And just as honest persons would fare badly

I consider that it is in instruction and education that the future security and direction of the destiny of every nation chiefly and fundamentally rests.—Kossuth.

We shall one day learn to supercede politics by education.—Emerson.

among a gang of criminals, so the way of the early truthseekers was exceedingly difficult. In a religion-controlled community the challenge of reason and investigation to established doctrines was met by persecution. Pioneer work of this character is the logical opposite of the criminal's. Biologically and sociologically, the criminal is "behind his time," and the pioneer "before his time." The former is anti-social, the latter pro-social.

But the criminal is not the only type of anti-social. In that wide category we may place not only invalids and lunatics, but also another class which I will call *truth-hiders*, chief of whom are the religionists. They, too, require treatment. Secularist lecturers, of course, would not think of telling the religious members of their audience they had a "screw loose." Yet may it not be a sober fact? May not a great deal of conscious support of, as well as lazy acquiescence to, religion, be the result of a faulty training, which has produced a mental disease, namely, chronic gullibility. And is not this disease as worthy of treatment as any physical ailment? Has it not been responsible for as much harm?

Some estimate of the benefits which pioneer work has brought to society may be obtained from a comparison of the treatment of pro-socials in the past, and of anti-socials in the present. As a condition of its progress society tends to diminish in anti-socials and increase in pro-socials. Both have been taken action against. When the pro-socials were struggling for expression, the action taken was of a vicious nature (burning, torture, etc.). These pioneers threatened, not the well-being of society as a whole, but the equanimity of a class within it, *i.e.*, the priesthood. It is the priests who persecute, and if the society in general is persuaded that the persecution is in the communal interests, that is all part of the game played by the priesthood.

As the pro-socials gain a surer foothold, society, being the richer, proceeds against its anti-socials in a much more reasonable and humane manner. It doctors its sick, shelters its lunatics, and is more or less content with ostracising its convicts, while its priests are gradually and gracefully being deprived of their influence. To that end the resources of the N.S.S. are devoted.

G. H. TAYLOR.

The Jew.

I MET him in a city street,
His eyes were warm as winery gold,
Although his form, upborne on tottering feet,
Seemed more than merely old.

He talked. And, while I listened there,
I wondered much and oft,
My mind bemused was thronged with fair
Earth-visions, fragrant, soft.

Or leafy lanes with lovely grass,
Where birds were shrilling loud;
And where full many a lad and lass
Showed fearless, gay, and proud.

And then I saw far Eastern lands—
Egypt and Palestine—
And when at times he touched my hands
I deemed that man Divine . . .

A little child heard me disclose
This meeting with the Jew,
And on the instant cried, "Suppose
'Twas Jesus spake to you!"

J. M. STUART YOUNG.

Onitsha, Nigeria.

Acid Drops.

We have often suggested that if Christian ministers were not fooling themselves and their congregations when they denounce war there is a very easy way for them to make a protest against it. They might disown any association with military parades, refuse to bless warships and big guns, decline to act as recruiting sergeants and also decline appointments in the Army and Navy. For a time we thought we had secured a convert in the Rev. F. Norwood, of the City Temple. For that gentleman began to ventilate opinions similar to our own. But it is one thing denouncing war and militarism, and quite another to give up jobs as chaplains, etc., which are paid for out of the public funds. So our only convert among the clergy has backslided, and has explained that when chaplains wear uniform, and subject themselves to military orders, and take pay from the war office, this is not identifying themselves with the military system. They wear the uniform for the sake of organized efficiency, and they take pay as ministers of Jesus Christ, not as military officers.

That makes it quite clear. But one wonders how long they would be permitted to give spiritual consolation to the soldiers if they were to say, as Dr. Norwood has said, that warfare is repugnant to Christianity? They would soon be deprived of their uniform, their status as officers, and of their pay and allowances. We would like to know whether Dr. Norwood, as an army chaplain, would tell the troops that was anti-Christian, that as a chaplain he had nothing to do with the rights and wrongs of war, and therefore could not pray for the success of the men to whose spiritual needs he was ministering? Chaplains in the army are as much soldiers as are army cooks. The chief difference is that they are better paid, and run far less danger. But in inciting other men to fight they are second to none.

The cunning of the Vatican in exploiting successive crises in the world was never more in evidence than in the Pope's recent broadcast message on the "peril" of Atheism. All thoughtful people in all nations are agreed that a narrow economic nationalism, an aggressive "patriotism," is one of the main causes of the present state of the nations. So His Holiness puts in a word to please those of this general and enlightened conviction. Then he goes on to deal with Communism, which, though he and many other pundits say so, is *not* the same thing as Atheism. Doubtless most Communists are Atheists, but a very small fraction of Atheists are communists. This confusion between an economic theory and a philosophy of life, and the necessary association of Freethought with revolutionary politics, is characteristic of Christian apologetics which make up in mendacity what they lack in knowledge. At the moment when Dr. Barnes is telling the world that scientific progress is making Christianity stronger and more credible than ever, the Pope issues this warning to all nations against modernism, materialism and Atheism. The warning was "splashed" in most of our popular "dailies," yet, as the *Manchester Guardian* points out, British Communists only number 9,000—more than half of them unemployed. On that latter matter, which is the secret of such growth of Communism as there is in this country, His Holiness has nothing to say except the well-worn platitudes about the intimate and cordial relations which should mark industrial enterprise in Christian communities who sink their class and social distinctions in the love of God!

Dr. Downey, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Liverpool, says that when he was a boy he used to dream of becoming a pirate. Well, it is not everyone who finds his boyhood's ambition so completely realized. Dr. Downey says that even as a boy he "found no serious difficulty in reconciling piracy with piety." If he had no difficulty in reconciling the two things as a boy, we imagine he finds less in reconciling the two now he is a man. We do not know whether Dr. Downey has a

favourite quotation, but we suggest he might adopt, "There is a providence that shapes our ends," as a quite suitable one.

When I was a lad I prayed to be
A pirate chief on the raging sea,
I dreamed of treasures rich and rare,
Of feasting high with ladies fair,
And 'neath the flag with the grim crossbones,
I sent my victims to Davy Jones;
And I sang as I played with the captured gold
Hurrah for the life of a pirate bold.

And he who ruleth land and sea,
Gave heed to my prayer for piracy.
He graciously granted my heart's ambition,
And placed me here in this high position.
He gave me power o'er Lord and Hind,
He gave me power to loose and bind,
He gave me power o'er ladies fair,
And made me master of riches rare.

I became the chief of the the Mersey's Sec,
Oh, a pirate's life is the life for me.
And so at the age of near threescore,
I sing my thanks for evermore,
I thank the Lord who heard my prayer,
And in his goodness placed me where
I still can cry with joy untold,
Hurrah for the life of a pirate bold.

We are getting on! Once upon a time the formula ran "Atheism and Immorality"—as though one of necessity implied the other. Now we find the *Church Times* writing about the world's descent into "Atheism and morality." From the positive we sink to the negative. Atheism is not of necessity immoral, it is simply without morality. That is why we say we are getting on.

All the same we should like to know how a society can exist without morality. In other words, how can a society exist without having some things recognized as, say, advisable and some things recognized as inadvisable? Of course, there may be various ideas concerning the things recognized as right, as, for example, when the Christian Church roasted and tortured men for a difference of opinion, or when men are imprisoned for ridiculing a religion that one must either laugh at or cry over. But whatever the things counted as permissible or non-permissible, the sum will constitute the morality of the society in question. The *Church Times* should set one of its staff to study the nature of morality. We say this in all good feeling because the *Church Times*, in spite of its normal theological absurdities, is capable of spasms of common sense.

For instance, commenting on the Government's Parson's Protection Bill it sympathizes with the Attorney-General who as President of the Lord's Day Observance Society is bound to oppose every attempt to rationalize Sunday, but who as Attorney-General is ordered by the Government to support the Sunday Entertainments Bill. The alternative is, we presume, resignation. In a Trades Union, a Sporting Club, or nearly any other association such an attitude would be impossible. In such cases some measure of consistency, even of decency, has to be maintained. But in politics so lofty a standard of conduct is not expected.

But in the course of its comments the *Church Times* says of the hypocritical talk of the Sunday films being "demoralizing and vulgar." But they are no more demoralizing on Sunday than they are on Monday? If they are not fit to be exhibited on Sunday then they are not fit to be exhibited at all." We have said the same thing scores of times. It is a pity to find, however, the same writer repeating the hypocritical cant about Cinemas affording relief to people with uncomfortable homes.

That is not the case, and those who use the argument know it is not the case. It is one of those pieces of humbug for which English public men are so notorious, and is an instance of how such lies are repeated until those who utter them come to almost believe they are speaking the truth.

It is commonly claimed for the Christian Churches that they are centres of "charity," i.e., alms-giving and relief. If the claim be examined now it will be found that the wide extensions of National Insurance benefits—covenanted and otherwise—(called "the dole") have left the churches little to do in a field in which salvation and soup and blankets were, by the religious organizations, profitably associated. It is more surprising to find that in 1890-1900, the period covered by the late Charles Booth's *Life and Labour of the People in London*, the "charitable" operations of the churches were regarded critically by him, and by lay authorities whom he consulted. Poor Law doctors thought religious relief "spasmodic and inadequate," and that "it hardly ever lasts long enough to be of real service." And as to the Christian precepts about "giving to him that asketh," Charles Booth said (Vol. VII.) :—

There is, no doubt, a real difficulty in squaring the teaching we find in many passages in the Bible with the practical rules of action laid down, not only by the Charity Organization Society, but by all serious thinkers, including the leading representatives of every religious community in London . . . All practically admit the impossibility of acting upon the Gospel precepts, as does the whole of Christendom, with the possible exception of some sects in Russia. But by all the difficulty is evaded rather than met. (p. 413.)

In the realm of "voluntary charity," as in the realm of doctrinal belief, Christian preaching and Christian practice are thus in violent contrast and conflict.

Another passage dealing with Christian inconsistency may be usefully quoted. Booth says :—

No one will, I think, hold that all those who are good are religious, nor would it be easy to maintain that no bad person could be so, even though the assertion be safeguarded by the interpolation of the word "truly" before religious. On this subject the common view is rather remarkable in its flat inconsistency, for almost every man who is recognized as "good" is credited with being also religious, while, too often, those who are recognized as being religious are profoundly distrusted. (p. 431.)

The "common view," in the latter item, has assuredly increased its hold since those words were written over thirty years ago.

Anglican Christians, like other citizens, have become familiar with the notion of cheap travel tickets. Now, the idea seems quite an innocent one. But it appears to have had a harmful effect on the Anglicans. They have got it into their heads that they are entitled also to a cheap ticket to Heaven. A commission appointed by the Church Assembly in 1929 solemnly abjures a stingy laity that they ought not to expect a cheap ticket to Heaven. They ought to pay a first-class fare and a little bit over, to provide a few luxuries for the higher clergy. Of course, the Commission does not put the matter quite like that, but that is what its reproof of the laity of ungenerous giving really amounts to.

An article in a publication concerned with home-doctoring and good health, explains that in psychology the term "conflict" is used to denote a struggle, not between an individual and some force in the external world, but between two parts of the same mind. Recent research, we learn, has shown that the human mind, far from being merely a receptive organ on which impressions are registered, is a battlefield on which, day by day, hour by hour, conflicts are being waged. The mind, we are told, is in perpetual conflict with itself, the conscious part struggling against the unconscious or the ascetic against the primitive, or, as the psycho-analysis express it the ego instincts (the instincts of self-preserva-

tion) against the sexual instincts. The writer of the article adds:—

The situation is not to be summed up in theological terms of a conflict between good and evil, because the primitive, repressed part of the mind is entirely innocent of evil intent. It is concerned exclusively with its own gratification, and is ignorant of the distinctions in conduct that loom so large to its opponent, the civilized, moral consciousness.

One gathers that the antiquated prattle of priests and parsons about "sin" and "Satan" and "temptation," etc., is dangerously misleading; for it deceives their ignorant followers as to the real nature of their psychical disorders and problems. And that is one sound reason why Freethought should continue to undermine the authority and power of the Christian medicine-men.

The *Methodist Recorder* recently devoted two columns to that alarming topic (for parsons) "The Drift to Paganism." The right time to get alarmed about any "drift" is when there is a drift to Christianity." Meanwhile, the Christian part of the world might spend a goodly portion of its energy in catching up with the best thought of Paganism—which the Christian Church tried hard for centuries to stamp out. We may add that the Christian lie, by implication, that Paganism stood for nothing but pleasure in this world is wearing a bit thin. It imposes only on the most ignorant sections of the community. We think, too, that there are many of our scholars who should make a public protest against this Christian lie.

For the benefit of a critic who has failed to understand "what the B.B.C. stands for," Mr. Filson Young explains in the *Radio Times* that:—

It stands for broadcasting, and, quite obviously, for broadcasting conducted according to certain standards: ethical, artistic, social, political, and economic. Like loyalty to any kind of standard, this implies limitations. In religion, for example, the B.B.C. confines itself to broadcasting the Christian religion, and therefore excludes Unitarianism, Judaism, Mohammedanism and many other respectable religious creeds of the world.

After that, we are curious to know what is the nature of the "standard" which imposes very stringent limitations indeed as regards the broadcasting of religion. The most obvious "standard" would appear to be fear—the fear that the Christian religion is too weak to hold its own against rival creeds, and especially against Secularist philosophy and Freethought criticism. Fear has evidently begot another "standard"—safety first. In the light of such "standards," it is quite understandable that there are more "limitations" imposed in regard to the broadcasting of religion than on any other broadcast subject. So long as the "limitations" stand, however, the standard which intelligent persons call fair-play for all opinions is unlikely to form a part of the B.B.C. policy. And this means that listeners are deprived of the privilege of forming their own opinion about religion—a privilege which the vested interests that control the B.B.C.'s religious policy quite naturally regard as dangerous in the extreme.

With perhaps a dim recollection of the common Christian phenomenon—"lying to the glory of God," a writer in a godly paper says:—

Obviously Christians should be veracious . . . and in fact, too, that is what the world expects and is pained sometimes not to find. Harm done to the persuasive powers of our faith by such delinquencies as failing to observe this elementary injunction is beyond the calculations of actuaries in ethics.

This is rather subtle flattery in its way—this suggestion that the world expects Christians to be truthful and only occasionally finds they are not. Really, the "world" is not quite so innocent as to expect anything of the sort. The "world" has had too long an experience of Christians not to have had the illusion, that Christians love truth, dispelled. Christians lie as readily as anyone else. The one advantage they have is that their religious training so easily enables them to "rationalize" their motives for lying—which explains why the

Christian conscience is in a class by itself.

Mr. R. Pounds, the literary editor of the *Daily Express*, went to Church the other day for the first time in many years. Freud, Bertrand Russell, Keith, and many writers like them, had influenced him as they had influenced numbers of people, but "we were a mirthless crowd." "We" always are. Directly a backslider wants religion he discovers all his non-religious friends are "mirthless" or "gloomy," or "in a wilderness." "Our souls," Mr. Pounds tells us, "were getting parched." In fact he was dying to get back, so back he went.

The religion of his childhood was full of "terrors." It always was. That's why he backslided, and that is why he was always hankering to get back to the "genuine" faith, the dear simple faith of so many dear simple Christians. However, there was the "same old musty smell in the Church," and "one hymn was all banality and sentiment." The sermon "was not a good one," and Mr. Pounds himself did not, strange to say, become a "convert." No, he wants *you* to become a convert. He discovered that "the man who cuts himself off from the Church and her communion is sooner or later in danger of starvation of the soul." Not *his*, of course, but *yours*. Can anything be more pitiable than this kind of desperate attempt to get people to go to Church? Could such an article as Mr. Pounds' have any influence whatever on anybody?

At St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, Sir John Ambrose Fleming gave a lecture, the other week, on Miracles, and he declared the truth "of the greatest of all miracles, the Resurrection of our Lord, is based on documentary, historical, and circumstantial evidence." So that settles the question again for the 9,783,862nd time. We did not hear Sir John ourselves, but no doubt the proof he gave that the evidence was genuine was as good as anybody else's. The *Church Times* however does hit the nail on the head. To a "believer in a beneficent and omnipotent God, there should not be the smallest difficulty in believing that the recorded incidents in the life of Christ, God became Man, are historic facts." We quite agree and have said so dozens of times. Once you swallow the one big absurdity, "the Christian God," such teeny, weeny absurdities as the Resurrection should present no difficulties at all. Granting the one, Sinbad, Aladdin and all other fairy tales are just as credible as the story about "God become man."

Fifty Years Ago.

We are "on road to hell." Well, if we must go somewhere, that is just the place we should choose. The temperature is high, and it would no doubt at first be incommodious. But, as old Sir Thomas Browne says, afflictions induce callosities, and in time we should get used to anything. When once we grew accustomed to the heat, how thankful we should be at having escaped the dreary insipidity of heaven, with its perpetual psalms, its dolorous trumpets, its gruesome elders, and its elderly beasts! How thankful at having missed an eternity with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, and all the many blackguards and scoundrels of the Bible! How thankful at having joined for ever the society of Rabelais, Bruno, Spinoza, Voltaire, Thomas Paine, John Stuart Mill, and all the great poets, sages and wits, who possess so much of that carnal wisdom which is at enmity with the pious folly of babes and sucklings!

On the whole, we think it best to keep on our present course. Let the bigots rave and the parsons wail. They are deeply interested in the doctrine of heaven and hell beyond the grave. We believe in heaven and hell on this side of it; a hell of ignorance, crime, and misery; a heaven of wisdom, virtue, and happiness. Our duty is to promote the one and combat the other. If there be a just God, the fulfilment of that duty will suffice; if God be unjust, all honest men will be in the same boat, and have the courage to despise and defy him.

The "Freethinker," June 4, 1882.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

WILL "MIMNERMUS" please call at the office at his earliest convenience?

T. MACKINNON.—Thanks, but we have had a copy of the Marlowe, with the expurgated passages almost since it was issued. It is an example of the way in which things are done in this Christian country that Marlowe's opinions concerning Jesus Christ should have been expurgated. Church and Government have always recognized that ignorance in one form or another, is essential to the perpetuation of Christianity.

A. HATTIE AND C. HARPUR.—We are sorry, but we have not the space to permit further and wider correspondence on a topic that is not quite within the scope of this journal.

C. HARPUR.—You overlook the fact that it is part of the Spiritualist theory that the denizens of the next world are always trying to get into touch with those who are here.

H. MURPHY.—Thanks for cuttings.

T. SMITH.—It is impossible for us to publish lengthy letters, even when they are pertinent to the subject on which they comment. Our waste paper basket would not need emptying so frequently if correspondents would bear this in mind.

E. C. ASHWORTH.—We sympathize with your point of view, but any censorship that is tolerable should be one that is open and legally questionable. The present methods are largely irresponsible and therefore bad.

J. G. BARTRAM.—Glad to hear of the good work that is being done in your district by Messrs. Brighton and Atkinson. We wish them continued success.

NEMO.—The action of the Missionaries in protesting against a self-governing Indian University holding an examination on a Sunday is a good example of the arrogance and injustice to members of other creeds engendered by Christianity.

Mr. W. COLLINS writes with becoming modesty that although his name appeared rather prominently in the report of the Manchester Conference arrangements, these could not have been carried out smoothly without the loyal co-operation of his committee and the assistance given from headquarters. He hopes Manchester will go "one better" the next time it has to entertain the Conference.

R. TISSOTMAN.—The resolution was carried. That much could have been seen from the statement that the Society was already doing what it was asked to do; and intensification is purely a matter of opportunity, as in the case of the Sunday question.

J. C. KRAST.—Pleased to learn that you are doing what you can to forward the Cause in your new environment. We quite appreciate what you say with regard to the work done by open-air speakers and Branch workers. J. S. Bartram is one of those staunch supporters of Freethought whom one can count on finding where work is to be done. We have known him for nearly forty years.

"AGRATAE."—Received cuttings with thanks. It is not always possible to comment upon what is sent, but they are nearly always useful.

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

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

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

The "Freethinker" will be forwarded direct from the publishing office at the following rates (Home and Abroad):— One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

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.

The Branches are getting well to work with the distribution of the criticism of the Sunday Bill, which will be found advertised on the back page of this issue. This is as it should be, because the most good will be done while the question is fresh in the public mind. The Lord's Day Observance Society is conducting a raging campaign on behalf of Sabbatarianism, and we ought to make our influence felt. A quarter of a million copies ought to be circulated before the Bill comes on for a Third Reading. We want our readers to give all the help they can, financially and otherwise, to get this done. Outside reputable Cinemas should be a good place for those who would undertake the distribution of the leaflet.

The action for breach of contract which Mr. Cohen, on behalf of the N.S.S., is bringing against the Clerk to the Birkenhead Justices is down for hearing at the Birkenhead County Court on June 28. At the last meeting of the Finance Committee of the Birkenhead Corporation it was agreed, on the recommendation of the Borough Justices, that the action should be defended by the Corporation. In view of certain circumstances this is a very remarkable step, and it may lead to unexpected results. That will be seen later.

Mr. G. F. Green, a member of the Wembley Branch of the N.S.S. proposes attending some of the meetings during the bye-election at Dulwich, and distributing some of our leaflets on the Sunday question. He suggests that Freethinkers in South London might care to co-operate with him in this matter, and in putting suitable questions to the candidates. Those living in the Constituency, and who care to help, should write to Mr. Green at "The Folly," Fairview Way, Edgware.

By the will of the late Miss Alice Baker the Secular Society Limited benefits to the extent of £50, and the Benevolent Fund of the N.S.S. to a similar amount.

Mr. G. Whitehead has been putting in eight days open-air lecturing in Birkenhead, and local bigotry appears to have grown quite lively at times. There were threats of violence, and attempts were made to rush the platform. Mr. Whitehead appears to have conducted himself with restraint and judgment, and managed to carry most of his meetings through. The police, too, did what they could to prevent violence. Birkenhead is a place that demands attention.

Mr. G. Whitehead will be in the Nelson district for the week commencing to-day (Sunday). The local Branch of the N.S.S. will co-operate and a good supply of the special leaflet against Sunday Entertainments Act, 1932 has been despatched. Freethinkers in the area willing to help in the distribution of the leaflets, as well as supporting the meetings, will please attend, or communicate with the local Secretary, Mr. R. Hartley, 241 Chapel House Road, Nelson, Lancs. Details of meetings will be found in the Lecture Guide column.

One of the best books recently issued by Messrs. Watts & Co., is H. C. Lea's *History of Sacerdotal Celibacy*. It is the best for several reasons. First the work was originally sold at one guinea, and that placed it beyond the reach of many who would like to possess it. Second, it is the classic work on the subject, and it is never likely to be done again for many years. This because to write such a work demands an amount of scholarship that few possess, and time for research that few have. No effective reply has ever been made to the work. As it stands it forms a damning indictment not only of Roman Catholic celibacy, but also of fundamental Christian ideas. It is a book of which every Freethinker at least, should possess a copy. The work which covers 600 pages is complete with the exception of the notes attached to the original edition. It is published at 5s., and is marvellous value for money. The work may be obtained from the publishers or from the Pioneer Press. By post 5s. 3d.

Immortality.

"Men used to be sure, or thought they were sure, of the fundamental postulates of religion . . . They are not sure of them to-day and great numbers of people are not even interested in them. It is to the situation thus created that the Archbishops of Canterbury and York referred in the joint pastoral they issued shortly after entering upon their new responsibilities last year. 'We are enclosed by a material civilization great in the achievements, confident in its self-sufficiency, in which no place is found for God or even for the spiritual life of man.' A strong statement but not too strong in view of the facts." (Canon R. J. Campbell: *Christian Faith in Modern Light*. (1932) p. 24.)

THE word "Immortality" will not be found in the Dictionary. It is the title of a book, the sub-title of which is "An Old Man's Conclusions." Dr. McConnell, the author, an American, is a Doctor of Divinity, and also a Doctor of Laws. Ordained in 1871, he has been Rector of three large Episcopal Churches in America before he retired in 1904. Upon one occasion he was defeated by only one vote from becoming Bishop of Long Island.

Dr. McConnell commences his book, which was published in 1930, with the statement: "I am eighty-five years old. I cannot expect to live many more years. Then I will be dead. Either in the furnace or the grave my body will be dissolved into its material elements. Will anything survive. If so what?" The book is an attempt to answer, or rather, a searching consideration of, this question. Dr. McConnell admits that "no answer has yet been found." And this is not for lack of search, for: "The usual arguments and analogies are not convincing. I have read scores of books on the subject and have learned from them just nothing at all. So far as positive information is concerned I am no better off than was Job or Plato or Pilate. I do not hope for much. I know that proof is unattainable. But I cannot dismiss the matter with old Omar, who "heard much argument," but in the end: "Came out by the same door that I went in."

Like multitudes of others, including the present writer, our author was brought up in the traditional beliefs regarding the Soul, God, and the Bible. He was fifteen years old when Darwin's *Origin of Species* was published, it was not until about ten years later that this, and Huxley's *Place of Man in Nature* fell into his hands and destroyed the traditional views. But not at once, he resisted, with the great majority, and became, he says: "a not undistinguished champion of the traditional conceptions." But gradually the irresistible truth prevailed and he found himself living, in thought, in a changed universe.

As Dr. McConnell observes no doctrine of the resurrection and the future life formulated fifty years ago can satisfy the man of to-day; for during that period there has been an accumulation of knowledge immeasurably greater than in all preceding time; and yet, owing to the: "strange illogicalness of human nature it is possible for multitudes to accept and hold all this new knowledge, and at the same time to hold on to notions about life and death and immortality and the nature of man which are quite incompatible therewith. But I cannot conceive how they can do so when they come face to face with the great mystery, as I do through the passing of the years. And I know that I am not alone. The new biology, physics and anthropology have overclouded the hope of life in the world to come." (pp. 47-48.)

For instance, the Creed says, "I believe in the resurrection of the body." And when it was first formulated it was intended to mean literally what it says, and, as our author observes: "This is the meaning it still has for multitudes." It means that at death the soul departs, the body decays, but at the end of

some indefinite period, the body will be reconstituted, of the same matter and each soul reunited to its own body to await the verdict of the Judgment Day. In this connexion, Dr. McConnell might have quoted the vivid description of what would happen, given by Edward Young, the popular eighteenth-century poet, in his poem *The Last Day* :—

"Now charnels rattle: scatter'd limbs, and all
The various bones, obsequious to the call,
Self-mov'd advance; the neck perhaps to meet
The distant head, the distant legs the feet.
Dreadful to view, see through the dusky sky
Fragments of bodies in confusion fly,
To distant regions journeying, there to claim
Deserted members, and complete the frame.

The body thus renew'd, the conscious soul,
Which has perhaps been fluttering near the pole,

This soul returning, with a constant flame,
Now weds for ever her immortal frame.

Written and accepted as an awe-inspiring picture at the time, it would be difficult, even for religious people, to read it without laughter to-day. So far have we travelled.

Again, supposing the soul, with memory and self-consciousness unbroken, to survive the death of the body, how could life express itself? "Can a 'disembodied' human spirit exist at all? Of what coherence? What sensations would be possible to it?" Asks Dr. McConnell: "How could it consciously touch existence? Lacking a body, would anything be possible to it save a few vague formless sensations?" As he further remarks: "The usual conception of life beyond the grave is a strange mixture of inconsistencies. It figures existences which are disembodied, but at the same time exercising the faculties of living men. They think, they speak, they love, they enjoy and suffer, they sing and moan, all by hypothesis without the organs essential. They roam in sweet fields, feed on ambrosia and listen to celestial harmonies." (p. 15.) As he rightly observes, these futile fancies are the phantoms created by love; and anyhow, who wants to exist as a phantom, or a wraith, especially if they are responsible for the drivel that the spiritualists claim to receive from them. They add, as Huxley remarked, 'Another terror to death.'

What, again, can be made of this case, told by Doctor Keen, among many others, to our author. A lad of sixteen was brought to him suffering from epilepsy. A partial imbecile, slaving, violent, obscene, untruthful, thievish, a foul travesty of humanity. A forgotten scar on the skull indicates pressure on the brain. The skull is trephined, the pressure removed, the epilepsy cured! "But this is the least part of it. His soul is cured! His obscenity, deceit, and dishonesty disappear. Not seven devils have been cast out of his spirit, but a bit of bone has been lifted out of his brain. The result is the same. But the barest recognition of the fact compels a new conception of the soul." (p. 31.) Nor does the matter stop here. Ten thousand experiments have built up the conviction that every activity of the mind, every emotion, every thought, is dependent upon the action of the brain and nervous system. "The soul has seemingly been convicted of false impersonation. Instead of being an independent entity, living in the body and dominating it, it seems to be but a convenient word to designate the complex sum total of the highest and finest activities of the human body. This is the last word that Science can speak on the subject; and so far as it goes it is true." (pp. 31-32.)

As Dr. McConnell remarks, and it should be noted by those who declare that Science and Religion have now kissed and become friends: "It is idle to assert that there is no conflict between theology and material

science. The contest is literally a life and death one. It has made it increasingly difficult to believe that the soul has an independent existence, and that this existence can survive after the cessation of bodily functions. Those who feel this difficulty most keenly are those who most ardently wish for immortality. The 'instinct of living' is strong in them. But this wish is overlaid by their knowledge." (p. 37.)

Then there is the problem, for believers, if man descended from animals, at what point did the soul creep in? The believer who could read this book without having his faith shaken may boast immunity from doubt.

W. MANN.

The Wonders of Wizardry.

THE story of the occult arts is a very strange one. Throughout savagery, barbarism and so-called civilization itself witchcraft, spiritualism, mascots and other delusions mislead and make mournful the lives of the people. In a recent contribution to the *Times*, Frank Melland, who writes from personal experience, has presented a melancholy picture of witch-bound Africa as it exists to-day. Yet, the urban populations of modern Europe were held in thrall by this baneful belief until quite recent times. The fear of witchcraft lingers among the peasantry in all European lands, and in priest-ridden Ireland, so late as 1895, one Cleary, a Tipperary farmer, having burnt his wife alive as a witch, was tried and found guilty, and sentenced to a long term of imprisonment. Stranger still, a learned author, Montagu Summers in his *History of Witchcraft*, published in 1927, expresses opinions, not entirely dissimilar to those who championed the cause of demonology during the terrible witch persecutions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. For we must remember that not only the luminaries of the Roman Church, but Luther, and even the enlightened Erasmus, were equally convinced of the reality of witches and witchcraft.

That the malign influences ascribed to the ministers of the dark arts have any reality appears preposterous to the modern practical man. Yet, it is indisputable that a witchcraft cult has persisted through the ages. Doubtless, many of the craftier diviners who held converse with the dead or cast their sinister spells upon the living deliberately traded on the hopes and fears of their clients. Some, however, seem to have been perfectly sincere and prided themselves on the possession of the occult powers accredited to them. Moreover, when any form of superstition is popular, even those who consciously deceive become so puffed-up when they listen to the ever-expanding stories of their magical achievements that they may ultimately persuade themselves of their truth. The medicine-men in every community exercise authority out of all proportion to their natural ability. Although frequently the objects of resentment, mystery-men inspire awe, combined with feelings of admiring wonder for their supposed supernormal powers. It is to be noted that it was usually the aged and infirm practitioners of the necromantic arts who were the victims of popular vengeance.

The tale of the Witch of Endor in the Old Testament, and the story of the devil-possessed swine in the New, stamp the Scriptures with the delusion of demonology and wizardry. And these eerie fancies were encouraged and developed by the Christian Church. The exorcism of evil spirits was through the centuries an accredited function of priests. Though now acclaimed as a saint,

Joan of Arc herself was burnt as a witch with the cordial approval of both Church and State. Whether Shakespeare participated in the superstition of his age seems doubtful, although his friend Ben Jonson, like Thomas Browne and Wesley at a later date, subscribed to the belief. Walter Scott has presented a realistic picture of the weird sisterhood in his "Bride of Lammermoor," but he was a consistent sceptic, and the weasened crones in *Macbeth*, marvellously life-like as they are, lend no authority for the poet's belief. Still, with Banquo we may ask:—

"What are these
So wither'd, and so wild in their attire,
That look not like the inhabitants o' the earth,
And yet are on't?"

Dating from prehistoric ages and presumably an early product of primitive culture magic was hoary with antiquity when, emerging from peasant communities, it invaded the City States of olden times. Lurking amid the shadows, the cult of necromancy, with a ritual associated with the adoration of the dead, insinuated itself among the devotees of the official religion.

Within historical times this happened in Britain. When missionaries despatched from Rome arrived in England to convert the heathen Saxons, they found a faith in which devotion to weird and mysterious spirits played a conspicuous part. The natives were too deeply attached to their Nature divinities to immediately reject them in favour of the gods of Christendom. So the heathen temples were sprinkled with holy water, and the sacrifices made to their deities were gradually transferred to the saints and divinities of the Church.

Adherents of the supplanted native cult who were compelled to embrace the new religion were not always willing to abandon their magical arts. Many returned in secret to the faith of their fathers. While the Church was yet weak, the recusants observed their Sabbath, administered their Sacraments, and held their religious services—their covens—the congregation consisting of twelve worshippers with a chief or minister. Such an assembly suggests the Last Supper, and the witches, or Satanists as they were called, were charged with parodying and blaspheming Christ and his disciples.

The persistence of Paganism in an officially Christian community exasperated the clergy, and many accusations of impiety urged against the witch fraternity by popular prejudice and priestly enmity were probably overdrawn. But that the witch cult persisted from the Saxon period to recent times is evidenced by the fact that, to this day, the ancient magical doctrines and traditions, under a Christian veneer, survive in every rural retreat throughout the Western World.

The various traditions familiar to the folk-lorist furnish a truer history than the envenomed charges of the Church. Yet there remains substantial testimony to a bitter conflict that raged for centuries between the champions of orthodoxy and the adherents of occultism. God and Satan were universally regarded as unending enemies, each striving to outwit the other. Driven from the altar and confessional, the witches were urged towards the worship of the darker aspects of Nature. Social and religious ostracism united to promote the cult of Satanism in those who were suspected or accused of the sorcerers' sinister arts. In their devotions the witches inverted the entire scheme of Christian salvation.

In his *Witchcraft and the Black Art*, Wickmar assures us that whatever else the witches were, "they were souls in revolt; in fact they were Anti-Christ, and that with a vengeance. Their feeling towards all

authority was such that they could imagine nothing more revolutionary than to bring about an *inversion* of Christianity. One part of their ritual, that of chaunting the Lord's Prayer backwards, and another, centuries later, that of helping to bring into existence what has come to be known as 'The Wicked Bible,' with the 'Thou shalt not commit adultery' of the seventh commandment printed to read 'Thou shalt,' show this very clearly."

The Witches' Sabbaths were celebrated four times a year when the witches rode on their broomsticks from far and near through the air, or came perched on the backs of pigs and goats. Also there were weekly gatherings where the presiding genius was hailed as Satan, and divine honours were paid to him. Children were solemnly dedicated to his service. For centuries no one doubted that every hamlet harboured a witch midwife who dedicated infants to the Devil's service as soon as they were born. To counteract this evil the Church had midwives ever ready to baptize children immediately after delivery so as to save them from Satan's grasp.

Punishment for witchcraft was burning alive until the progress of rationalism humanized the law. Yet so powerful and persistent was the cult and so attractive were its services that the Church adopted the mystery play as a rival entertainment. God the father appeared in these plays as an old man, and in the Creation mystery Adam and Eve stood stark naked on the stage.

Countless thousands of men, women and children suffered death by drowning, boiling, and burning alive for the imaginary crime of bewitchment. At last, at the Renaissance, a few bright spirits were found protesting against this orgy of insanity although many generations elapsed before the witch mania evaporated. The wise words of the sceptical Montaigne ultimately prevailed when men realized that, "After all, it is setting a high value on our conjectures to roast a man alive on account of them."

The world moves slowly, and it was not until the reign of George II, in 1736, that the English Statutes against witchcraft were repealed. Even then, religious men regarded the reform with grave misgiving, and seceders from the Church of Scotland, in a Confession of National and personal sins published by the Presbytery in Edinburgh in 1743, bitterly protested against "the penal statutes against witches having been repealed by Parliament, contrary to the express law of God." It is also significant that in the land of those great liberators, Burns and Hume, the last judicial execution for witchcraft in the British Isles took place, while popular resentment towards witchcraft was violently expressed there and elsewhere long afterwards.

T. F. PALMER.

'At Set O' Sun.

FULL well I know, after the dust and heat,
A day must dawn, when I shall take my staff
And leave the mart, the crowded city street,
And with a laugh
Face the red glory—onward, onward press
Until I reach a little country lane
And a cottage ivy-wreathed;
Then one I love, with joy and tenderness
Will meet me smiling . . . Softly, softly breathed:
"Dear Mother!" — "Home again!"

J. M. STUART YOUNG.

Onitsha, Nigeria.

Culture-Murder.

A FAVOURITE criticism levelled at Freethinkers by various impertinent clerics is that they are lacking in the qualities of awe, wonder, respect, gratitude, humility and reverence; and that this lack is owing to coarsened minds and seared feelings worked upon by selfishness, vindictiveness, greed and all uncharitableness. But this lie is losing weight as people generally learn to think for themselves and disencumber their minds of the traditional inhibitions, which ecclesiastical authority publishes as having divine origin and divine sanctions. The pretensions of priest and parson are being more clearly seen through.

The implication, of course, is that the highest culture is only possible to mankind through the agency of supernaturalism. The casuistical attempt to persuade people that religion simply means goodness, purity, beauty and truth, and that Freethought means their opposites is laughed at by well informed persons who see the foundations of supernaturalism crumbling away. But perhaps their laughter is premature. The clerical view finds acceptance with very many minds which are closed against any consideration of the message of rationalism. There are very many who refuse to listen to that message, principally because of the clerical description of Freethought and Freethinkers above mentioned.

This mean and despicable lie must be thrown back in the teeth of the mean and despicable clerics who utter it. Not all prominent Christians have lent themselves to this campaign of calumny. Not all Christians regard Bradlaugh and Foote as brutal fiends and plotters against the welfare of humanity; or represent to their less literate fellow-believers, who look up to them, prominent Freethinkers as coarsened and debased. One recalls with satisfaction the attitude of men like the late W. T. Stead, who exposed the American Torrey, and the late Sir Robert Anderson, Commissioner of the London Police, who, in controversy, declared he had found Atheists courteous and cultured. There is nothing finer than Gladstone's generous tribute to the memory of Bradlaugh. But there can be no doubt that a number of unprincipled, vain, egotistical and feeble-minded clerics prefer to throw mud at their opponents and disseminate slanderous falsehoods about them among uneducated, illiterate and unthinking people. What a method of securing and retaining the allegiance of the poorer classes! Boycott of Freethought as a policy may not be heroic. Clerical slander is beneath contempt.

In point of fact the Freethinker generally speaking has a fuller capacity for grateful appreciation of what is good, beautiful, true, noble and heroic than is possible to anyone who is not a Freethinker. This is not a boast. It is merely a statement of fact. Boasting always is associated with selfishness. There is no selfishness in the Freethinker's possession of this fuller capacity which he would gladly share with all his fellowmen. The influence of religion has always been to make real enjoyment, whether of the senses or the intellect, secret, furtive, exclusive and often sordid. The Freethinker wants to open the beauty and glory of nature to all; and a necessary corollary to this is that human beings must have the opportunity to be placed in the position, whence they can contemplate and learn to appreciate that beauty and glory. Free them from their machines; free them from this hideous irrationalism of industrial "rationalization"; guide them to the higher altitudes of thought; rid them of their feelings of dependence and subjection; let them assert their manhood and woman-

hood and engender respect for themselves. Only so can they enter into communion with the beauty of Nature and the masters of Art and Literature.

It is depressing to survey the melancholy products of the schools. The monotonous sameness of the mentally stunted beings who emerge from our places of learning is a sight to drive us to pessimism. The fault at the outset is that small children are forced to school without any consideration as to their own personal desires and inclinations. There is little done to make their environment in the course of their education *desirable* and *pleasant* to them. Where one child may be able to fit himself to the conditions, a hundred cannot do so. Individual attention is impossible. Classes are too large. Life at school for the many becomes a stereotyped daily grind at often unattractive lessons. This is what a country ridden by supernaturalism has done for its youth. Give the youngsters the "one thing needful"—that is let them be gripped by the Christian superstition; and the matter of their mental development may take its chance. Is there any reason for slackening in our resolute advocacy of the secular solution of the education problem? Does our present system furnish any proof that Christianity has ennobled the mind of youth—taught it a love for the highest culture—taught it reverence for the heroic figures of History—imbued it with feelings of respect for the great masters in Literature and Art; and for the self-denying reformers and seekers after Truth—stirred in it feelings of wonder and awe in the sunrise or sunset—inspired it with the passion to serve its kind and soften the lot of the unfortunate? On the contrary. *Look at the newspapers!*

IGNOTUS.

Good for Darrow.

The Story of My Life, by Clarence Darrow (Scribners, 158.) is of exceptional merit and interest. The author is best known as a lawyer who has participated in a number of world famous trials, criminal and otherwise. He it was who tackled that holy man William Jennings Bryan when, in the Scopes trial, the latter sought to vindicate "the Rock of Ages" against the ages of rocks. In a country in which legal and economic emoluments are in intimate association with popular politics and orthodox belief Clarence Darrow has won a respect rarely given to lawyers in any country by a life-long devotion to principles which he has never surrendered for hire, place, or popularity. It is significant to note, in the case of a Freethinker of such unquestionable calibre, the reaction of the general press to his confessions. It may be hard to believe it, but the following extraordinary sentence appears in the opening paragraph of a review of this book in the authentic organ of literary rectitude in this country. "It would be so difficult that it is fortunate that it would be inappropriate to present the author of this autobiography under a positive label." Now unless it is "inappropriate" or forbidden to do so in the *Times Literary Supplement*, it is easy and indeed inevitable to describe this author under a positive label, namely Freethinker! For in this book we have a working example of Freethought as a philosophy of life.

"One cannot live through a long stretch of years without forming some philosophy of life," says Darrow, and there is no more attractive feature of his pages than the philosophical tabloids which he drops as he goes along into the clear water of his prose so that they dissolve and become part of it as their ingredients are part of him. There are also many shrewd touches which will be appreciated by English readers associated with advanced movements. For instance Darrow joined a Henry George (Single Tax) Club. "In due time I realized that at every meeting the same faces appeared and re-appeared week after week, and that none of those cared to hear

anything but a gospel which they all believed. It did not take long for Single Tax to become a religious doctrine necessary to salvation." This was in Chicago in 1888, but it is a faithful account of like proceedings not one hundred miles from the *Freethinker* Office to-day.

About half of this book is taken up with the engrossing narrative of Darrow's fights for the lives and liberties and social and industrial rights of the people. The criminal trials include that of Eugene Debs—to whom the author pays a warm tribute—Loeb and Leopold, McNamara, Heywood and others. The Railroad Strike of 1894, found Darrow attorney for the Railway Company, but his sympathies for the men in whose cause he resigned his official connexion with the Company, but on terms of mutual respect as creditable as they are rare in such circumstances to both parties. With a doctor and a nurse in attendance, and when certain death was predicted if he left bed, he went to court in pursuit of duties with which he was then charged, and, although unable to stand, addressed the jury "looking like a ghost" and "feeling like a decent ghost ought to feel," and got his way with them. "Some" man, if I may drop for a moment into an idiom from which this book is mercifully free.

We will give an example of "the spirit of Pyrrhonism," in which this book is said to be written. "When we abandon the thought of immortality we at least have cast out fear. We gain a certain dignity and self-respect. We regard our fellow-travellers as companions in the pleasures and tribulations of life. We feel an interest in them, knowing that we are all moved by common impulses and touched by mutual understanding. We gain kinship with the world. Our neighbours and friends and we ourselves are travelling the same route to a common doom. No one can feel this universal relationship without being gentler, kindlier, and more humane toward all the infinite forms of beings that live with us, and must die with us."

ALAN HANDSACRE.

Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR A. THOMSON AND LIFE.

SIR,—In his interesting article Mr. Fraser owns that two years ago he was wrong in his estimate of Sir J. A. Thomson. This encourages me to suppose that he is still open to correction, for I think he is wasting good pellets on a dummy Thomson.

He depicts Prof. Thomson as the upholder of a "double truth." He represents Sir Arthur as supplying two different true answers to the question, how did life begin? This is not the case, as Thomson himself always labours to show. If Mr. Fraser will re-read *Outline of Science* (section by Thomson), *Contemporary British Philosophy* (section by Thomson), *If I Were a Preacher* (section by Thomson), *What is Man?* and *Scientific Riddles*, he will find that according to Thomson there are *two* questions, viz. (1) how did life begin? and (2) why did life begin? the first demanding a scientific, the second a religious, answer.

Let me illustrate again *from the actual quotation*. Mr. Fraser uses. To the question, how did life begin? Thomson says: "Some would reply that living creatures were first made by divine fiat . . . Personally we regard this as true, but our present question is a scientific one." This passage surely shows that Thomson *rejects* "by divine fiat" as an answer to the scientific question "how?" and accepts it as an answer to the religious question "why?" Therefore I affirm that Thomson does not, as Mr. Fraser says, "provide a religious answer to the scientific question."

Like Mr. Fraser, I also reject Thomson's teleology. But the point is, that Thomson's argument is not invalidated by anything Mr. Fraser has said, simply because it extends further than he allows. I have no doubt Mr. Fraser *could* demolish that extension, but that is beside the point.

G. H. TAYLOR.

[We have been compelled to slightly abbreviate the above from considerations of space.—ED.]

National Secular Society.

REPORT OF EXECUTIVE MEETING HELD MAY 27, 1932.

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

Also present: Messrs. Quinton, Rosetti (A. C.), Clifton, Le Maine, Ebury, Preece, McLaren, I. M. Werrey-Easterbrook, Mrs. Quinton, Junr., and the Secretary.

Minutes of the previous meeting read and adopted. The Monthly Financial statement was presented. New members were admitted as follows, Stockport, Sunderland, Hants and Dorset, Manchester, North London Branches, and the Parent Society. Matter concerning the Beechcroft Settlement case, Bradlaugh Centenary, Annual Dinner, 1933, International Freethought Federation, reports from Messrs. Brighton and Clayton and Birkenhead, Stockport, Birmingham, Glasgow and Manchester Branches were dealt with. The meeting endorsed the preparation of a special leaflet against the Sunday Entertainments Act, 1932. The President said a large quantity had been printed, and were being rapidly despatched for distribution. It was reported that under the will of the late Miss A. M. Baker of Birmingham a legacy of £50 had been received by the Benevolent Fund. Motions remitted from the Annual Conference were discussed and 11a, dealing with a Gramophone record of an address by the President was adjourned for further information. The meeting then closed.

The next meeting of the Executive will be on July 1.

R. H. ROSETTI,

General Secretary.

Obituary.

MRS. JANE WHITE.

ON May 25 the remains of Jane White, aged seventy-six, beloved wife of J. G. B. White, of Oxhill Villas, Stanley, were laid to rest in Stanley Cemetery. Deceased was a member of the Newcastle Branch, having joined the National Secular Society in 1889, her emblem of membership, signed by Charles Bradlaugh, of which she was proud, was at her request, placed in her hand in the coffin. In her unflinching zeal for Freethought she would walk miles to hear a lecture. Being of a kind and cheery disposition, she was greatly respected by all who had the pleasure of her acquaintance. The cortege was followed to the grave by a large number of friends, amongst whom were representatives of Chester-le-Street, and Newcastle Branches, and Mr. J. T. Brighton impressively read a Secular Service, and referred to deceased's many sterling qualities. After which she was left to rest beneath a canopy of beautiful flowers. Mr. White and family are assured of the heartfelt sympathy of all friends.—J.G.B.

Nothing that consists of matter is formed for perpetual duration.—Blair.

Who kindles love, loves warmly.—Lavater.

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LONDON.

OUTDOOR.

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

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (White Stone Pond, Hampstead): 11.30, Sunday, June 5, Mr. A. D. McLaren. Monday, June 6, South Hill Park, Hampstead, 8.0, Mr. L. Ebury. Thursday, June 9, Leighton Road, Kentish Town, 8.0, Mr. L. Ebury.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Cock Pond, Clapham Old Town): 7.40, Mr. F. P. Corrigan. Wednesday, June 8, The Triangle (opposite "Heaton Arms," Rye Lane, Peckham): 8.0, Mr. C. Tuson. Friday, June 10, Camberwell Gate, 8.0, Mr. L. Ebury.

WEST HAM BRANCH N.S.S. (outside Technical College, Romford Road, Stratford, E.): 7.0, Mr. E Saphin.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): Wednesday, June 1, at 7.30, Messrs. Tuson and Wood. Thursday June 2, at 7.30, Mr. E. C. Saphin. Friday, June 3, at 7.30, Messrs. Bryant and Le Maine. Sunday, June 5, at 12.0, Mr. B. A. Le Maine. 3.30, Platform No. 1, Messrs. Bryant and Wood; Platform No. 2, Messrs. B. A. Le Maine and Tuson. 6.30, Platform No. 1, Messrs. Wood, Tuson and Bryant; Platform No. 2, Messrs. Hyatt and Saphin.

WOOLWICH BRANCH N.S.S. (Beresford Square): 7.45, Mr. R. H. Rosetti—A Lecture.

INDOOR.

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.1): 11.0, S. K. Ratcliffe.—"A World Can End."

COUNTRY.

OUTDOOR.

ACCRINGTON MARKET, Sunday, June 5, 7.30, Mr. J. Clayton. BIRKENHEAD BRANCH N.S.S. (Haymarket, Birkenhead): 7.30, P. Sherwin and D. Robinson, Saturday, June 4.

CHESTER-LE-STREET (The Bridge): 8.0, Saturday, June 4, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

DARLINGTON (Market Steps): 7.0, Sunday, June 5, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

DURIAM (Market Place): 7.0, Tuesday, June 7, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

HANTS AND DORSET BRANCH (36 Victoria Park Road, Bourne-mouth): 6.30, Sunday, June 5. Branch Meeting.

HAPTON, Tuesday, June 7, 7.30, Mr. J. Clayton.

HIGHAM, Wednesday, June 8, 7.30, Mr. J. Clayton.

MERSEYSIDE FREETHINKERS.—Sunday, June 5, a Ramble to Hill Road and Ince Woods. (The Ramble on May 22, abandoned owing to inclement weather). Meet South Road Station, Waterloo, 2.45 to 3.0 p.m.

NEWCASTLE BRANCH N.S.S. (Bigg Market): 7.30, Sunday, June 5, Mr. Atkinson—A Lecture.

NEWCASTLE BRANCH N.S.S. (Bigg Market): 8.0, Friday, June 10, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

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Secularism declares that theology is condemned by reason as superstitious, and by experience as mischievous, and assails it as the historic enemy of Progress.

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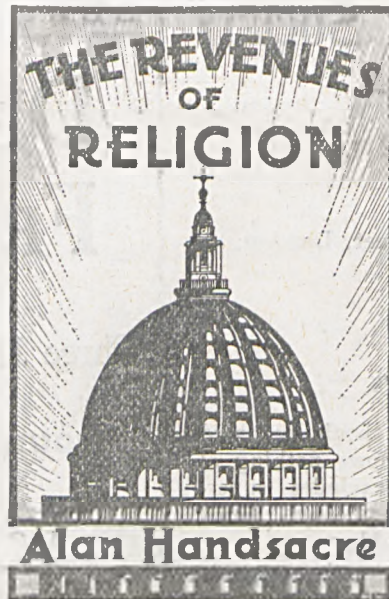
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