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

Views and Opinions.

Atheism or Theism?
 Quite recently the Bishop of Durham, Dr. Hensley Henson, attracted considerable newspaper notice by saying in the course of a sermon that there had never been a revolt against religion which could parallel the present one. It is not difficult for a parson to attract attention from the papers nowadays. He need only say that he does not believe in miracles, or the virgin birth, or that woman made her first appearance as the result of a bone-turning experiment, and it is chronicled as a remarkable utterance. It is apparently cause for wonder that a parson should show an intelligence at all beyond the Old Mother Hubbard stage of childhood. In this instance the Bishop was correct, although considerably behind the times in making the discovery. Intelligent and informed students of religion have for at least two or three generations been aware that the issue between religion and modern thought goes much further than whether a particular conception of God is right, or whether it is possible to prove the historic reality of miracles. The issue to-day goes much deeper than is implied by this class of question. It is true that there are still large numbers of believers to whom these questions are vital, but the Bishop of Durham is only one of the many leaders of the Church who know quite well that the modern position is far different from that which faced the Christian Church a couple of centuries ago. It is not to-day a matter of deciding whether this or that idea of God is correct, but whether a belief in any kind of God is possible to a genuinely educated intelligence. As Dean Inge once put it, the challenge to Christianity "was presented, not in the age of Darwin, but in the age of Copernicus and Galileo." It was then, to cite the same preacher, that the Christian map of the universe was torn into shreds. Ever since the Churches have been trying to repair the map, with greater credit to their ingenuity than to their courage or to their honesty.

When Christianity Awoke.

Religion has been described as a primitive science, and although the phrase is more picturesque than exact, it will serve. For religious ideas do actually spring from conceptions of man and the universe; there is, indeed, no other source from which they could come. And they remain valid just so long as the particular conceptions on which they rest are unquestioned. The decisive criticism of the Christian scheme came with the establishment of the Copernican astronomy. If that were true the central conception of Christianity was false. For Christianity, real Christianity was incurably geocentric. This earth was the centre of the universe, and man was the central figure of the earth, and in this universe "natural law" was no more than a casual imposition by an irresponsible power. Upon this view of the world rested the whole Christian "plan of salvation," with its subsidiary beliefs in miracles, prayer, angels and devils, heaven and hell. There is little wonder that the Church saw in the teachings of Copernicus and Galileo the natural destruction of the Christian theory. It was a decisive moment in the history of the war between religion and science—and science won.

But the mental attitude of the vast majority of people never represents the outcome of strictly logical processes. The new wine is poured into the old bottles, and although the taste may be different, the shape of the liquid is determined by the container. Old mental habits have to be reckoned with, and the consequence is that to the mass of believers all that takes place was a readjustment of religious beliefs. Christian phrases, Christian forms, Christian ideas were retained, and, so long as the absurdity presented for acceptance was not exactly the same absurdity as had just been disproved, the case of the gentleman who rejected the errors of the Church of Rome in order to accept those of the Church of England was exemplified. So far as extreme heresy was concerned its main form in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was deistic. A god was admitted, but the alleged revelation of God in the Bible was questioned. The God of Nature was posited in place of the God of Revelation. In terms of the new science particular miracles were denied, but the perpetual miracle of creation was admitted. In these circumstances strong play was made with the character of the Bible God, and the more lurid of Bible passages. The criticism of Christianity was still professedly based on the acceptance of a religion of some sort. Long standing frames of mind are not easily outgrown.

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Our Friend the Enemy.

It is a curious fact that one of the most striking works in support of Atheism was written by a Church of England Clergyman, Ralph Cudworth. Cudworth did not intend his work to serve that end,

but he stated the case for Atheism so fairly that his reply to it was obviously inadequate. As it was said the book suggested far more scepticism than it removed. A similar part was played by another clergyman, Bishop Butler, in his famous *Analogy*. The Deists had rested no small part of their rejection of the Bible on the nature of the deity revealed therein. The character of deity depicted there was quite unworthy of a God, and therefore could not be true. Butler met them on their own ground. His case was that if the God of the Bible and the God of Nature were the same, we should expect to find the character of both exhibiting the same features. And step by step he proved that all the characteristics which the Deists attacked in the God of the Bible could be found present in the God of Nature. Butler did not enter into the question of whether there was a God or not, that was taken for granted by both parties. What he did show was that there was as much reason for believing in the God of Revelation as there was for believing in the God Nature.

So far Butler scored. But this suggested another conclusion. Suppose instead of saying that the reasons for believing in either God are equally strong, we say the reason for rejecting both gods are equally weighty? The result then would be Atheism. And that was what actually happened to such as were able to push Butler's arguments to their logical conclusion. Butler, like Cudworth, had suggested a far greater danger to religion than he had removed. Setting out to strengthen the cause of Christian theism he had succeeded in really helping along the heretical movement in the direction of Atheism.

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The Trail of the Past.

But for a long time after Butler, British Free-thinking remained predominantly theistic in tone, at least in its public presentation. In spite of his tremendous onslaught on Christianity, Paine remained theistic in actual belief and in forms of thinking. And for long after Paine we can trace the persistence of this type of mind. It may be seen even to-day. There is, for example, the pitiful and pitiable clinging to the word "religion," with a total disregard to its theistic and historical implications and associations. Religion has for so long been a part of settled social life, and is so mixed up with all kinds of institutions, there is still the feeling of intellectual nakedness if one does not wear a religious badge. This type of mind is one that has no other real authority for its existence save the surviving fear of a very primitive taboo.

The persistence in Freethinking criticism of a semi-religious bias was also to be seen in the form of criticism of the idea of a God. "Can we believe in a God who is not at least as good as man?" was the form in which criticism was often cast. Or again, the existence of "cruelties" and "injustices" in nature were often urged as justification for not believing in a God. But the question of the existence of a God and that of God coming up to a human standard of excellence are quite distinct. This form of argument was clearly a "left-over" from the Christian teaching that God was all goodness. It was a quite legitimate argument in the mouth of those who actually believed in the existence of a God, but for those who had rid their minds of this fundamental foolishness it had no warranty whatever. At most it is a deistic argument, not an atheistic one.

Even when the general theory of evolution came to the front the persistence of fundamental religious concepts may be traced. Because the Christian theory had involved the belief in a moral order of the universe, evolution had to be justified on the same grounds. Some discerned a "purpose" behind

evolution, and talked at large of "ends" as though nature knew either ends or purposes, good or bad, high or low. Even Herbert Spencer sought to justify natural selection on the ground of its being a "beneficent process," as though we could reasonably predicate either beneficence or malevolence of nature at large, and above all praise the beneficence of a process which permitted a minority to survive only because the forces at work were not able to immediately kill them. It is a sadly amusing sight to note a professed unbeliever staggering along in fear of the ghost of a god after he has managed to get rid of the real thing.

* * *

The Primitive Mind.

Hardest of all to get rid of was the gross superstition of an ideal Christ. Unitarians having got rid of two thirds of the trinity retained a third of it, apparently blind to the fact that there was no better warranty for retaining this remnant than for what had been rejected. It is distressing to find so many professed unbelievers struggling to create an ideal moral teacher out of a purely mythological figure. Often this has been justified by the argument that there must have been some sublime moral character at the back of the Christian myth to have so enchained the admiration of men. As though the world is not filled with myths converted into solid history, and as though the ancient world could not furnish numerous tales of these miraculous saviours that were substantially on all fours with the myth of Jesus Christ! A genuinely scientific conception of human nature would have taught these people that miracles are as impossible in the moral as in the physical world. Great moral reformers are not born of the material furnished by the Christian mythology.

But all this is only what a scientific student would expect. If it is absurd to expect to find a character with the mentality and environment of the New Testament one of the world's greatest moral reformers, it is just as absurd to expect men and women to throw off at once frames of mind that have persisted very many generations. Historically, heresy does not jump from extreme orthodoxy to Atheism at one leap. The stages between the two are gradual even though the transition may be much more rapid in some cases than in others. But there does come a stage at which a distinct phase is to be noted, and it is the perception of this that has alarmed the Bishop of Durham. He realizes that a growing number of men and women are recognizing what the real issue is to-day, that the war of outposts is nearing its last stage, and that the real fight is at hand. For all but groundlings the question of what kind of a God we ought to believe in does not exist. The challenge to-day is the impossibility of any such existence.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

THE TRANQUIL MIND.

Let me possess
My present wealth, or even less,
And if the bounteous gods design
A longer life, that life be mine.
Give me of books the mental cheer,
Of wealth sufficient for a year,
Nor let me float in Fortune's power
Dependent on the future hour.
To Jove for life and wealth I pray,
These Jove may give or take away,
But for a firm and tranquil mind,
That blessing in myself I find.—Horace.

Priests and the People.

"The Bible is a nose of wax, and it can be twisted to any shape."—*Martin Luther*.

"Liberty's chief foe is theology."—*Bradlaugh*.

"The crime of inquiry is one which religion never has forgiven."—*Shelley*.

At a recent Church Conference, Sir Thomas Inskip, the Conservative Attorney-General, expressed himself as follows:—

Public opinion in the press was largely in favour of greater liberty for the individual. The Church should challenge the Press in its demand for Sunday relaxation and the like.

Sir Thomas is a faithful son of the Church of England, and has learned his sorry lesson only too well. In his capacity as a lay member of his church he is entitled to air his pious opinions, however silly and erroneous they may be. But here's the rub! He is also a salaried Minister of the National Government, and he is an elected Member of the House of Commons. How is he elected? Under a democratic system by the will of the people. For what purpose is he elected? To do the will of the people. Yet, as a Churchman he regards the wishes of the people as the whim of a child, and he turns to Mother Church for a stern rebuke, and even for stricter measures. In plain English, Sir Thomas Inskip is not the first man who finds a complete contradiction between religious opinions and democratic principles, and who has turned to the priest for a solution.

Mother Church, in this particular instance, is the so-called, State-aided, Church of England, one of the wealthiest religious organizations in the whole world. She possesses property to the value of £100,000,000, has State-priority in matter of religion, and controls an army of 300 bishops; and 16,000 priests. She is so firmly established in this country that she largely controls national education, and, through the Bench of Bishops, holds the controlling power in the Upper House of Parliament.

Hence it is important to know what this particular Church teaches. Every priest of this vast organization has to subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion, and these articles make most curious reading in the twentieth century in a country pretending to civilization. They teach as the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, that a spirit can be at the same time a father and a son, and also proceed from itself as a ghost. They teach that "Adam" and "Eve" were the first human beings, that they ate forbidden fruit, in consequence of which act of petty larceny, the whole human race is fallen, and countless millions are damned to everlasting torture. They also teach that the Roman Catholic Religion, the most important in all Christendom, is a vain invention of Satan, and that the present tenant of Windsor Castle is the head of the original and only genuine Church of Christ.

There are thirty-nine of these precious articles, and every Anglican priest subscribes to them, under, to him, the most solemn conditions. Yet, we know that great numbers of them do not believe in them, or observe them, that they are taking money by false pretences. The Church is "a trade," as Dean Swift has reminded us, and were it not for the golden rewards in this world, few priests would remain in the sorriest of all professions.

This Parliament-made Church is so entwined with our political life that the Ecclesiastical Canons are still in force, except they conflict with the law of the land; and the Law Courts have decided that they are binding on the thousands of Anglican priests. These canons are truly amazing productions, and ought to make thoughtful citizens think furiously. The first

dozen are aimed at Nonconformists, and all but one ends with a curse, a distinguishing mark of vertebrate Christianity. If you deny the royal supremacy in Church affairs you are cursed. If you deny that this State-manufactured Church is the one and only you are cursed. If you say that the Prayer Book, and the Thirty-Nine Articles, are out of harmony with the Christian Bible you are cursed. And so on, and on, the curses flow freely in the true spirit of Christian charity. But that the law of the land overrides this old-world barbarous nonsense, everybody who refused to attend the parish churches would be cursed, and their names read out in those places of worship, a lengthy proceeding these days.

Sir Thomas Inskip is a loyal son of this Church, and he is willing to act as the clerical catspaw. He is willing that English necks should be placed under the heel of the priests. Yet it is wrong that priests should override Democracy. There is no evidence that the intellect and character of the clergy are such as to make their guidance infallible. The clergy are simply a body of men, with doctrines and dogmas that have their roots in barbarism, and are an anachronism to a modern people, claiming a place in the State as though they were of real importance.

Priestly teaching is mischievous. It is a bitter and a grievous thing that boys and girls, silly women, and innocent folks, should be taught such antediluvian ignorance in the twentieth century that millions of their fellow countrymen are accursed. All who support the priests are silly sheep, all who differ are giddy goats. It is an insult to the spirit of Democracy. Indeed, it is a matter of rejoicing that nothing worse than cursing can happen to the Nonconformist to-day. In the Ages of Faith the clergy were pitiless, and heretics were sent to the torture-chamber and the stake. Heresies change in the course of the centuries, but the heart of the priest is as black as ever. The Protestant Reformed Religion is the State Church by law established. It is an institution protected by Parliament. If it is to continue, it must not be narrow in dogma, nor tyrannical in authority. It has become insignificant through restriction to a band of fanatics who see eye to eye along the single hair that divides tweedledum from tweedledee.

MIMNERMUS.

The History of the Alphabet.

THE story of the development of the alphabetical signs is extremely interesting. Few, however, are those who ever reflect on the origin and meaning of the twenty-six conventional signs of which our written and spoken language is composed. It appears strange that through the various combinations of twenty-six symbols, all the many millions of volumes, scarcely two alike, in the British Museum, owe their existence. The Oxford philologist, Max Müller, once stated that "by putting together twenty-three or twenty-four letters in every possible variety, we might produce every word that has ever been used in any language in the world. The number of these words, taking twenty-three letters as the basis, would be 25,852,016,738,884,976,640,000, or, if we took twenty-four, would be 620,448,401,733,239,439,360,000; but, even these trillions, billions and millions of sounds would not be words, because they would lack the most important ingredient—that which makes a word to be a word—namely, the different ideas by which they are called into life, and which are expressed differently in different languages."

Letters form words, and many of our commonest

words represent what Trench once termed "fossil history." For example, the word "book" is derived from Anglo-Saxon *boc*, a "beech," for the bark of that tree was made into tablets "on which written characters were inscribed." Again, as Clodd notes in his volume on the Alphabet, that ancient pen the stylus, "illustrates the passage of the language from the concrete to the abstract in its application to the way in which a writer expresses his ideas. We speak of his 'style,' just as we say, 'he wields an able pen,' this word being derived from the Latin *penna*, 'a feather.' The phrase *lapsus calami*, 'a slip of the pen,' preserves record of the use of a reed (Latin *calamus*), which also survives in 'quill' from Old English *quyelle*, 'a reed.'"

The part played by the written word in the progress of civilization is inestimable. Apart from human power to treasure and record its manifold efforts and achievements civilization could neither have been attained nor preserved. Yet, from humble beginnings, all the letters of ancient and modern languages have been elaborated. In many communities, present and past, tangible objects have been, and are employed as messages or records. Even with a race so highly cultured as the ancient Peruvians knotted cords known as "quippus" served as aids to memory. Single, double, or multiple knots represented stated numbers, while the colours of the quippus denoted different meanings. Another mnemonic or memory assisting device was used by the Red Indians. This was the *wampum*, a belt ornamented with shells and beads so arranged as to record events or rights to land. Among ourselves a knot is sometimes tied in a handkerchief as an aid to memory. From earliest Egypt to contemporary savagery, the use of looped and knotted cords as memory aids is evident. A curious survival of this primitive practice was the exchequer tally still in use in the nineteenth century. Indeed, so great was the accumulation of tally sticks that they were used as fuel in belated Government offices, and the overheating of the stoves led to the burning of the Houses of Parliament in 1834.

Pictorial devices have been extensively utilized both as records and as aids to memory. As the centuries roll on the picture reaches a representative stage when it becomes transformed into a symbol, in which, for instances, an arrow is used to denote an enemy or a bee is drawn to personify industry. An Indian pipe is regarded as an emblem of amity, while a whip indicates power.

Ideographic characters seemingly arose from the purely pictorial. An ideograph has been described as "a drawing representing not a sound, or even a word, but an idea. Thus the drawing of a man with protruding ribs represents famine; of an eye with tears dropping from it, sorrow."

From the ideographic, a transitional system was evolved. Six different communities in various regions of the globe, while retaining the ideograph, also introduced symbols of a distinctly phonetic character, and the two functioned side by side. These six schemes probably arose independently and comprise the Sumerian and Babylonian, the Egyptian, Hittite, the Chinese; as also the script of the Aztecs and Mayas of pre-Columbian America.

In order of ascending evolution the phonetic system next appears. In this stage the phonogram, or sound representing sign becomes prominent. With a verbal scheme a sound-sign represents a complete word; in the syllabic, a sound-sign represents syllables; while, finally, in an alphabetic scheme a sound-sign is used for each vowel or consonant.

Reviewing the several stages in order of evolution we note that the pictorial sign suggests the thing represented. Then the picture sign serving as visual picture suggests the name, while in the phonetic the sign functions as an ear picture, which suggests the sound. This phonetic system possesses the important advantage that constant signs are chosen to stand for constant sounds. It is claimed that by these means "the intellectual progress of the human race was assured, because only thereby was the preservation of all that is of abiding value made possible. In brief, the origin of the alphabet was due to the ingenious discovery that, all the words which men utter being expressed by a few sounds, symbols of these could be selected accordingly; hence the twenty-six letters of the alphabet make up the half million words contained in the Oxford Dictionary."

Much remains to be determined concerning the primary source of the earliest characters from which the English and allied alphabets have been derived. It appears established that the historic Greeks were indebted to the trading and travelling Phœnicians for their letters. For the Phœnician script certainly dates back very many centuries B.C. Yet it is improbable that these letters were indigenous in Phœnicia. The epoch-making discoveries of Sir Arthur Evans in Crete make clear the existence in prehistoric ages of a Minoan system of pictographic writing. This, in the later Middle Minoan period had developed into an abridged hieroglyphic system which, in its turn, became transformed in late Minoan times into two different kinds of script.

It is therefore quite arguable that the maritime Phœnicians may have gained their alphabet from the Minoan peoples of Crete. The excavations at Knossos in Crete not only demonstrate the existence of a splendid island culture, but also indicate that centuries before the Phœnicians went down to the sea in ships the Cretan peoples were in constant communication, both culturally and commercially with Syria, Greece, Egypt, and other near Eastern lands.

Happily, when the Phœnicians diffused their alphabet the Greeks were the first recipients of the gift. Other races that received it, retained it unimproved. The Greeks on the contrary, enriched the then consonantal alphabet by adding letters to serve as vowels so "that there might be a visible sign for every audible sound of the human voice." Furthermore, they turned superfluous gutturals and sibilants to useful purposes and completed their improvements by ultimately transposing the Phœnician (Semitic) custom of writing from right to left to that of left to right.

Still, the Latin alphabet ranks above all others in efficiency. Several scripts, the Phœnician among them, were once employed in the Italian peninsula but all have perished save the Latin. When once attained, the ascendancy of the Latins made their alphabet supreme in Italy. It was destined to become the official script of the Roman Empire and thus spread far and near. Later, when made the mouthpiece of the Catholic Church it was firmly established throughout the Western World. Apparently, the earliest Indo-European language comprised twelve consonants and three vowels (i, a and u). It was in Latin that the *e* and *o* were added. Other improvements were also introduced, but the language lost its purity with the barbarian invasions, the downfall of Pagan civilization and culture, and the triumph of the Church.

At last civilization re-emerged from the ruins, and there slowly arose from the dialects of the Romance races, whose tongue was derived from the language of ancient Rome, the Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese and Roumanian, as written and

spoken to-day. The glories and beauties of French, Italian, and other Romance literature thus repose on the priceless legacy of language bequeathed by the Latin race of old.

T. F. PALMER.

The Passing of Occultism.

It has often been remarked that biologists are less prone than physicists to embrace spiritism or other mystic or animistic cult. Those, in particular, who are engaged in the investigation of the brain and nervous system are in the way of learning much about the multifarious activities of the Body-Mind. Of these there is now so much fairly established knowledge as to render any supernatural explanation of either physical or mental events needless and rather absurd.

A great mass of information has emerged from the experimental researches of Pavlov, on Responses; of Watson, the leader of the Behaviourist school of psychologists; of Freud, Jung, McDougall and others. A useful account of the work is to be found in the *Science of Life* of Wells and Huxley; and from that book most of the following points have been taken.

The fundamental conclusion involved is, as we should expect, that body and mind are not distinct entities, but are two modes of expression of a unitary organism. Beginning with simple reflexes (*e.g.*, the snatching away of the hand from a hot object), we proceed to the less simple, conditioned responses, brought about by the interposition of some other influence between the impulse and the simple response. The human infant, though exhibiting surprisingly few definite, spontaneous, instinctive responses, shows simple fear of loud noises. No fear of shape or size of animal is shown, whether at home or at the Zoo. But if repeatedly handed a toy animal while a loud noise is made, the child soon exhibits "conditioned fear" of the object when no noise is made. Again, a child impulsively tries to grasp a lighted candle, but after being slightly burnt for a few times, the hand is only partly reached out toward the light, and then not at all. The impulse has been counteracted by Inhibition.

Following the recognition of a vast and complicated series of such events, "we begin to realize the conditioned reflex as the unit of which our higher mental activities are built up"; and that "the reactions of the brain to the stimulations that are constantly streaming in from the sense organs are controlled by a series of delicately adjusted inhibitory processes." The two opposed elements, Excitation and Inhibition, proceed throughout the nervous system, and they exercise general control of the cerebral hemispheres, the seat of the higher mentality.

The bearing of all this on many of the more conspicuous mental phenomena is plain and overwhelming. "Internal inhibition," writes Pavlov, "is but a scattered sleep, sleep of groups of cellular structures; and sleep itself is nothing but internal inhibition which is widely irradiated, extending over the whole hemispheres, and involving the lower centres of the brain as well." Parts of the brain may remain awake during general sleep, as when a mother hears the feeble cry of her child though insensible to other and louder noises. Hypnosis seems to be intermediate between sleep and wakefulness, between general and local inhibition, the controlling centres of the cerebral cortex being out of action while the lower reflex centres are sufficiently awake to keep the body erect and balanced. Here we note the power of suggestion, which is, however, by no means confined to the hypnotic state.

Then we have to reckon with the Unconscious, that immense welter of masked, disconnected, normally undiscerned elements—apparently a mixture of inborn tendencies, urges, appetencies, images, racial and early individual memories, which have sunk, or have been thrust down below, because they are painful or at least out of harmony with the normal conscious contents of the mind. They well up in sleep and under some other influences, and may be brought into consciousness by

suggestion. They recall the "fantasies of childhood and the mythology of savages."

We have recently become familiar with the fact of mental conflict between the levels mentioned, and with the Repression of the lower. Hysteria, for example, "is the work of the Unconscious," and is brought about by "inhibition of the controlling centres in the higher part of the brain, while the lower centres have broken loose." Neurasthenia results from more prolonged conflict, neither Conscious nor Unconscious being able to get the mastery.

In some cases conflict results in the well known phenomenon Dissociation of Personality. This explains many of the cases of "loss of memory" reported in newspapers and by the radio, and also, doubtless, many if not all of the more striking recorded cases of supposed possession by evil spirits. Such persons "were in reality the sport of repressed parts of their own selves acting through the Unconscious."

Among other effects of partial inhibition we encounter Regression, which, in extreme cases, involves the loss of all memory of later years and a relapse towards a worried, childish attitude of irresponsibility, a wish for the safety of the nursery again—or, it may be, for the safety of a supposedly infallible church. The counterpart of regression is Exaltation, a hysterical exaggeration of partial inhibition. "Many of those who are called 'mystics' are the exalted outcome of a distressful mental conflict." Here obviously we have the explanation of religious mania of the prophet, the redeemer, the hot-gospeller, and others who exaggerate out of all rational proportion one idea, commonly one which is a merely traditional and wholly unexamined notion or belief.

Related to these are the victims of a variety of forms and degrees of insanity, a condition following from inhibition, and resulting in loss of contact with reality, loss of power of logical thought, and "imprisonment in self." Thus we have, for instance, the case of a man, who on becoming a Freethinker left the Roman Catholic Church; who, during his acuter, depressive attacks reverted to his former orthodoxy, saying that he was eternally damned, that he wished to commit suicide, but refrained because he would in that case go straight to hell.

As regards some of the phenomena associated with modern spiritualism (when not fraudulently produced) the authors state that there is no reason for believing that automatic writing is the work of extraneous spirits; and the same is true of the "control" of the medium—the trance-like condition, the altered voice, and the rest. Both phenomena are explainable by the known facts of Dissociation of Personality.

Other alleged spiritualistic phenomena are discussed; and though no definite denial of the actuality of some of them is expressed, we note the following in the discussion of "Materialization and Ectoplasm": "As Geley implies, the observer is part of the phenomena under observation. Which we would extend to this proposition, that the circle of observation includes all the reality of the affair." And in reference to the spiritualistic seance, in the course of the section, "The Dog Hypnotized," there is the following significant passage: "Put a dog—or a man for that matter—into a darkened room, with strange and unfamiliar and on the whole, meaningless things going on, and heaven knows what disturbances of the normal mental balance may not take place in his hemispheres." This is a hint with various implications; we commend it especially to amateurs in spiritualistic science.

J. REEVES.

And these religious observations
Only bug-bears to keep the world in fear,
And make men quietly a yoke to bear.
So that religion, of itself a bauble,
Was only found to make us peaceable.

Robert Greene.

Acid Drops.

That collection of poke-noses, the Public Morality Council, is promoting a Memorial to the Prime Minister advocating some measures which only need mention to our readers to indicate their character and object. (1) As the proper interpretation of "obscenity" is a matter of opinion steps should be taken to "co-ordinate" the views of it of all censors and departments "responsible for the control of films, plays and publications." (2) A body like that recently set up for films to be set up to act in these matters. (3) A Consultative Committee to act with the Censor of Plays. With cynical hypocrisy the Council declares that the appointment of such Committees on a democratic basis will make representations of public opinion "more easily available." Precisely what they do *not* want is public opinion; and, if we had a Parliament with a fraction of the independence that the present mob in their overwhelming majority could afford to have, it would see that the Prime Minister treats this Memorial as coming from those from whom it does emanate, and not as being in the least worthy of attention as "representative of public opinion."

To some newly ordained ministers, one of the elder experts of the devil-dodging craft said: "You are specialists in God, and therefore you are specialists in Salvation." He might better have said, "You are specialists in fiction, and your job is to persuade people that your particular kind of fiction is fact." That would have prepared the young fakirs for the unpleasant truth that nowadays it is very difficult to persuade people to believe in fairy-tales, especially divine, or "revealed" ones.

While hospitals everywhere are urgently in need of money, it is worth noting that it is proposed to build a cathedral at Guildford costing £200,000. Now, £200,000 given to the hospitals for the relief of suffering humanity would do a vast amount of good. But our ecclesiastics prefer to employ it in an attempt to please a God which no one can be sure exists. Although, of course, a cathedral may be used for begging divine aid for the sick, yet human experience has discovered that there is more practical help for the suffering to be had from a hospital than a cathedral. Therefore, most sensible people will prefer to subscribe to hospitals.

"The only hope is that God will do something; we have no other hope of any kind," declared a reverend doctor to some fellow-craftsmen. A rather pathetic hope, that. Seemingly the good man has learned that modern science has left nothing for God to do, and that many people are aware of the fact. Of course, the only hope for the parson lies in the direction of persuading people that he *has* found something for God to do. This is none too easy. God does nothing now. He overworked and exhausted himself during the last large war, in striving to achieve a victory for the Allies at the parsons' special request.

Converts to Christianity in India, declared a missionary, do not all come from the outcaste class. In the Hyderabad district he had baptized 200 caste converts. These, he explained, were not of the type of Hindu one sees as students in England, or represented at the Round Table Conference. "They were up-country village folk, many of them illiterate." Well, the "capture" seems hardly worth boasting about in connexion with a religion that claims to be the most superior of all religions. But the missionary has to say something to encourage his ignorant and credulous supporters in this country. In any case, his main hope in India is with the illiterate, just as the main hope of his brother in England is with the semi-illiterate. The wonder is that, with a religion like Christianity, these hawkers of "glad tidings" don't do more business than they do, in either country.

A pious writer thinks he knows what England needs. "A new heart—the purity of Jesus, the dying love of Jesus, the self-emptying compassion of the Lord of Glory—this is England's need, and the world's." All this sounds very exciting. The joke is, however, that mankind never at any time required the alleged "dying love of Jesus" nor any "self-emptying compassion of the Lord of Glory." The notion that man did require them is merely a superstitious conjecture based on an ancient fable about the "fall" of man and on fake views as to man's nature. England's need, and the world's, is not more Christian superstition, but less.

Lord Northbourne has been appealing for an extension of the system of guide-lectures in public art galleries and museums. Apropos of this a contemporary enquires why these treasure houses should be open mainly when the people are at work and closed at other times, and puts in a plea for evening opening. To this we would add the query as to why most galleries and museums should be closed on Sundays when the people are not at work and are free to avail themselves of the knowledge and culture to be obtained from these institutions. We may add that there is no reason why Sunday opening need entail any hardship as regards the employees. There can be no denying that Sunday is the most valuable day of all for the opening of art galleries and museums. But this rich opportunity is denied to the people because of the parsons' taboo.

A naturalist has been explaining that many a ghost-story can be traced to the beautiful white owl. It flies on perfectly silent wings, and is a ghostly white apparition in the twilight of midsummer. And its startling screech is enough to make one's blood run cold, if one is not aware that it is the owl's hunting cry. A story of a churchyard ghost may usually be attributed to the presence of a white owl, also named "church owl," because it often nests in church towers. Moreover, many stories of haunted houses are due to these owls, for the young ones, as well as their parents, utter all manner of queer snoring and hissing sounds while they are resting or roosting. After this, perhaps one may be allowed to express the hope that our "psychic experts" may never have been made fools of by a white owl.

The *Universe* sadly admits to one of its correspondents that "it is useless to attempt to argue with Atheists in the Park." We don't often agree with our Roman Catholic contemporary, but in this we do most heartily concur. The average Atheist, in the Park or elsewhere, has nothing but his own good reason to argue with. The average Roman Catholic—so he thinks anyway—has Jesus, the Holy Mother, the Pope, God (generally in this order) all the blessed apostles and a whole galaxy of angels to back him in a dispute with the hated infidel. And they are all "useless" against reason! Confession is good for the soul sometimes.

Every now and then the Lourdes Medical Bureau, to show its fervent impartiality refuses "to make a special report" on an obviously "miraculous" cure. A Lancashire girl had been lying on her back for twenty months with spinal trouble, went to Lourdes, celebrated Mass in the Grotto with other pilgrims, and suddenly sat up and commenced to walk unaided. This was quite as good an example of God's intervention as any of the others, but the Lourdes Medical Bureau didn't think so. We are at a loss to understand why—except, perhaps, that even in Lourdes there's a limit sometimes. Personally, we should like evidence that Lourdes has cured a really sick-unto-death Cardinal or even a common Bishop. Why just these nobodies whom no one can trace?

Some parsons in Oxford have been discussing "Christian Sociology"—though both they and their hearers admitted it was most difficult to define. We should think so indeed. The word "sociology" is at least clear but "Christian Sociology!" Anyhow, one

of the rev. gents in a paper on "Our Present Problems," has discovered that the words "my Kingdom is not of this world," really means, "My Kingdom is of this world"—which is a wonderful proof how Scripture can be adapted to any age or clime! But the Kingdom in *this* world, is that not just pure Secularism?

Another rev. gent thought the Oxford movement "one of the capital events in the history of England." It may be to parsons but we doubt whether one in a hundred citizens of this country knows anything about tractarianism except its name. But just ask them about Charlie Chaplin or the latest wireless and they will tell you all about them. Except among a few Anglo-Catholics, the Oxford Movement is dead, and never could it be revived again, not even with the magic pen of a Newman.

No national journal has done more or is doing more for "real" Christianity, that is, the "genuine" kind (whatever that is) than the pious *Daily Express*, but every now and then, some careless sub-editor allows a paragraph to pass which proves not only that all is not well in the religious world, but that the great campaign in favour of religion seems to be an utter waste of time. He heads an article "Church Bells Call in Vain," the subtitle being "Few People Attend Services," about the empty Sunday Churches during August. There was "a tiny congregation of worshippers" at St. Paul's, hardly anybody at Westminster Abbey, "empty galleries" at the City Temple and so on. We suggest persuasive articles are not much good in egging people on to Christianity. The best method is to *compel* them to come in. Heavy fines and long imprisonment are excellent incentives. What about a Beaverbrook campaign along these lines?

Mr. Hilaire Belloc does not like Protestant historians. He doesn't actually say so but he looks upon them as unmitigated liars where Roman Catholicism is concerned. Motley, for example, simply lied about Spain in his famous *Rise of the Dutch Republic*. Spain really treated the Dutch like angels, and no doubt Mr. Belloc would insist there was no Massacre of St. Bartholomew, no burning and outraging of Jews, the Spanish Inquisition was simply a kindly court of jovial gentlemen who wouldn't torture a fly and so on. Personally we always believed that the authorities relied upon by Protestant historians for all these "myths" were Catholics who were proud of what they did, but one is always learning. Mr. Belloc tells us in the *Universe* that "the plain truth is, that mere common sense in philosophy, mere sound morals and mere straight forward history is upon *our* side," that is, upon the Roman Catholic side. And no doubt there are Catholics who will believe such mere nonsense.

At Great Hampden Church a sporting journalist from one of the London dailies gave an address on "From the Top of the Grand Stand." Doubtless his text was "the race that is set before us!" (Heb. xii. 1.)

According to a pious contemporary it is "credibly stated" that Blackburne, Archbishop of York (1724-1743), employed Dick Turpin as his butler. Blackburne himself is said to have been chaplain on a pirate ship before he went into the same business ashore and in more respectable premises. As he was a man of "very jocular disposition" we can imagine his having many a good laugh with his butler as they travelled from London on the Great North Road, Turpin making notes of likely spots for ambushes on the way, which, according to legend, he made good use of when he gave up the Bishop for Black Bess.

It is a rare thing now-a-days for a church to be crowded, so the papers mention that when the Bishop of Blackburn went to preach at Morecombe "scores had to be turned away," and they had to "borrow extra chairs from a near-by hotel." The proprietor acted on the instruction to "give to him that lendeth and to him that would borrow turn not thou away." Also the Hotel probably opened when the church shut, and there may have been those who desired to wash down in the former the dryness they had acquired in the latter place.

A Welsh clergyman complains that some visiting gypsies to his parish left behind a dead donkey "to pollute the air." Perhaps they thought the neighbourhood of the church a suitable place for a miracle! And it is not given to everyone to have seen a dead donkey.

An aristocratic disciple of Spiritualism informs the world that "Earthly existence is but a school; it teaches us the laws of God." This is a useful sort of revelation. It reveals the fact that our informant hasn't advanced mentally beyond the school age. The world will be but a vast lunatic asylum when everyone believes that earthly existence is a school, and that the only true instructors, guides and philosophers are Spiritualistic mediums.

In defence of the modern "pagan," a woman reader of the *Daily Herald* says she has been married to a "pagan" for twelve years, and has never known him to be unkind or do wrong to anything. Her conclusion is that, "It certainly isn't going to church that makes us good." Quite so. But the advantage of going to church is that it makes one believe one is better than other people, because one's "sins" have been forgiven and one is now a special pet of God Almighty.

The Roman Catholics at Peacedown have given the Bath Rural District Council an awkward matter to tackle. A very "realistic" life-sized Crucifix has been erected within the railings of the Catholic chapel at that place, but facing the road, and immediately opposite the house of a Mr. Filer, who complains that "his wife, who is in a delicate state of health," cannot look out of the window without this thing "getting on her nerves." At the Council meeting it was stated that the crucifix had "frightened several people especially at dusk." Even a parson present had to admit that the figure was "causing distress." The Clerk having announced that as the erection was on ground belonging to the chapel and inside its own fence the Council could take no action, he was instructed to write to the Roman Catholic authorities on the subject. The crucifix is a hideous object anywhere; but it is not often that it scares anyone in this country. Why it should scare any Christian is beyond explaining—at least on Christian grounds.

The difficulties of Anglo-Catholic priests in making the Communion Service in the Prayer Book conform to the requirements for Mass were the subject of an animated discussion at a recent Convention of these gentry. We gather that it is their practise to inaudibly mumble the necessary additions in Latin from the Roman Missal, but, even so, neither the first or second Prayer Book, nor the form suggested in the "revised" one that Parliament refused to sanction, really satisfies them. A long and acrimonious correspondence on this subject has been going on in the *Church Times*, and referring to it, a speaker at the Convention said: "not content with washing our dirty linen at the parish pump we send weekly bundles of it to be laundered in Portugal Street in the presence of the whole Anglo-Catholic community." The contending writers certainly having been fighting like—Christians. This is no doubt unedifying for the faithful. The joke of the whole silly business is that every one of these men knows that what he hopefully calls his "fellow-Catholics" of the Roman communion, and their Pope, hold that he is no more competent to say Mass (or to perform the miracle of transubstantiation) than the most illiterate lay preacher among the Methodists.

The Rev. H. Glew, Vicar of Holy Trinity, Sydenham, preached on "The Christian message in an age of rejection." It seems to him that "modern knowledge has completely overshadowed Christianity." He confesses that "it is an indisputable but disconcerting fact that Christianity has contributed little to the ever-growing volume of scientific truth," and "Christianity seems to have no real place in the world." When he comes to tell us what he proposes to do about this grave, and from his point of view alarming position, Mr. Glew, if he will pardon us a sorry pun, seems to get stuck. He tells us he can offer something "of far more value than the products of this scientific age," namely "a gift of new life through God," which will enable us to "take and use these fascinating goods of science for the uplift of mankind." Man, it is to be observed, provides the "fascinating goods"; God provides a "new life" which, strangely enough, "does not seem to have any real place in modern life," and every unit of this life, according to Mr. Glew, "can be reduced to about thirty shillings-worth of garden fertiliser" per head!

That necessity is the mother of invention is illustrated in an address recently delivered by the Rector of Spitalfields, Rev. Colin C. Kerr. The Church, he says, to-day presents "a very depressing picture," a picture of "admitted failure." How has this come about? It has not happened suddenly but over a long period of years it has got worse and worse. This is the Vicar's clever explanation. "In Deism the world seemed to lose its sense of God's interest. In Evolution the world seemed to lose its sense of God's nearness. And in the modern relativistic interpretation of life man has lost all sense of God's authority." Now, says the Vicar, "when the world is crying for something absolute is the opportunity for the Church to step in." The man in the street, according to Mr. Kerr, says "Give me a man and I will believe in him. Give me a God and I will believe in Him. But a God who is fallible, and a man who is infallible and claims Deity, that is outside my comprehension." What sort of God, then, does Mr. Kerr offer him? We are sorry to say it is the old one who, "by an absolute act" the "atoning death of Jesus Christ" has "fixed once and for ever the relationship between Him and the believer." The clergymen, to whom this address was delivered, may think this is what the man in the street is after; but we should like to meet the man in the street in Spitalfields who has rejected relativity and accepted Mr. Kerr's "absolute."

From a returned missionary we learn that, "Whatever the man-in-the-street thinks [about the Christian religion] in this country, the man-in-the-street in West Africa is asking admission into the Church." More picturesquely, he might have said that the West African is pathetically eager to don the cast-off clothes of the European. That would have caused great exhilaration among the simple souls who support foreign missions.

Some people are very easily impressed—or they pretend to be. Thus, the editor of the *Bristol Evening World* is deeply impressed by the fact of some twenty thousand people gathering at the "Rock of Ages"—after considerable organizing and advertising to sing the famous hymn of that name. He says it proves that "there is a definite desire for devotion in the hearts of men and women." Wonderful! As though the same kind of crowd would not gather to see a man hung, to witness a royal procession, to catch a glimpse of a film star, or for a thousand other things that attract an unintelligent public.

In the New South Wales Cabinet, we learn, are three staunch Methodists—the new Premier, the Minister for Education, and the Honorary Minister in charge of Social Services. With three special pets of God in it, the Cabinet ought to work wonders. But we venture to

prophecy that it will prove to be just about as wise or as foolish as any other Cabinet. We haven't observed, so far, that piety adds anything to a politician's native intelligence and wisdom, or that it serves as a good substitute for intelligence and wisdom when these are lacking. And, after all, it is from the intelligence and wisdom of its politicians that a country derives its best advantages as regards sound government. If piety does nothing towards adding to a politician's mental assets, what good is it? The only people likely to benefit from piety in politicians are parsons. The pious politician can be trusted to safeguard the privileges of parsons.

Episcopal habiliments have often been the butt of wits. One of them was a slum boy who pitied the "pore old bloke who 'ad to tie up 'is 'at with bits of string." Another was the cartoonist in Oxford who when Dr. Horton, then at New College and thinking of the ministry, said, "I will wear no clothes to distinguish me from my fellow men," depicted the since famous divine stripped for a bathe in the river with the before-mentioned "caption" to the sketch. This will seem a frivolous treatment of the subject to our contemporary the *English Churchman*, which is much troubled by the "ostentation that marks the doings of Bishops and other Church dignitaries." When the "Bishops dress up and pose in mitres and gaudy vestments" they alienate "not only the 'masses,' but many of the 'classes.'" There is not much to choose in the matter of ostentation between the outdoor rig of a Bishop and his canonical outfit. The former is, indeed, rather more likely to do harm than the latter, as is instanced by a recorded case in which a Bishop, visiting a poor district, dismissed his car as the boundary and proceeded on foot in order to suggest that he "padded the hood" like ordinary citizens. By the time he arrived at the local vicarage he had a boisterous and caustic escort of small boys much interested in his legs and head gear. The way of the righteous is hard!

Councillor Harry Cunningham, of Sheffield (?) is quite a good specimen of a particular type of Christian. Speaking at a meeting of the Oxford Group Movement held in Sheffield he emphasized the good that had come from his surrendering himself to Christ. Christ, he said, was the best business man he knew. Since he had "surrendered" himself "my bills have gone up rather than down." One must add that Mr. Cunningham was referring to the bills he served on his customers, not those he received from him. It was only after his "surrender" that he discovered he had not been charging enough. Now that is an attitude that is certainly characteristic of one type of Christian. Christ and cant. Our Empire has been largely built up by men who have found divinity and dividends two sides of the same thing.

Fifty Years Ago.

The masses of men do not think freely. They scarcely think at all out of their round of business. They are trained not to think. From the cradle to the grave orthodoxy has them in its clutches. Their religion is settled by priests, and their political and social institutions by custom. They look askance at the man who dares to question what is established, not reflecting that all orthodoxies were once heterodox, that without innovation there could never have been any progress, and that if inquisitive fellows had not gone prying about in forbidden quarters ages ago, the world would still be peopled by savages dressed in nakedness, war-paint, and feathers. The mental stultification which begins in youth reaches ossification as men grow older. Lack of thought ends in incapacity to think.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A. C. RICHARDS AND J. ELSEY.—Many thanks for names, paper being sent.

T. W. HAUGHTON.—Thanks for cuttings. Always pleased to see your "fist" among our letters.

A. B. MOSS.—Glad to learn you received so much benefit from your holiday. Thanks for what you say in your letter.

W. WHITBURN.—The "Rock of Ages" business is too silly for words. But where some forms of religion are on the carpet stupidity is bound to reign.

F. R. PAPPS.—It is very difficult to say exactly what would be helpful, but we are sending a copy of the *Revenues of Religion*, which should prove useful.

T. KINNAIR.—You will probably find much that you need in *Revenues of Religion*.

J. CLAYTON.—You acted with courage and common-sense in doing what you did. There can only be a law, or bye-law against annoyance in such cases.

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

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When the services of the National Secular Society in connexion with Secular Burial Services are required, all communications should be addressed to the Secretary, 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 General Secretary N.S.S. will be away from the office for a few days, during which only important matters will be dealt with. Any delay in dealing with correspondence will be due to that reason.

It is not often that we get a frank statement from Christian sources of that hostility to learning which still survives in clerical circles. Books actually published by the Student Christian Movement Press and written by the former Principal of a Christian College are reviewed in the *Church of England Newspaper* by Dr. Margoliouth. This gentleman says "whatever the negative results of the Higher Criticism its positive conclusions have no stability." The books deal with *Religious Thought from Moses to Christ*, and with the *Religious History of Israel*, and deal with these subjects from a Christian point of view, but do not ignore scholarship. Dr. Margoliouth "would not like to be responsible for introducing them into a Sunday School," and declares that "our sacred books, like Homer's Iliad and Odyssey, require expurgation before they are put into the hands of the young." Also, he says that, "on the question whether the Old Testament should or should not be taught in schools I see no occasion to express an opinion.

Taught in this way" (*i.e.*, in the light of modern knowledge) "it is clearly a menace to religion, to morality, and to logical thinking." A pretty admission to come from a theologian in a religious newspaper.

The Sunderland Branch N.S.S. has been busy in the columns of the local press, and some very pointed letters from the Branch Secretary and others have appeared. From the defence it would seem, the only chance God and Faith have of getting a look in at Sunderland is by suppressing the local N.S.S. Branch's activity. Is it not easy to understand why the Churches and Christianity attract C3 intellects and characters.

Will members and friends of the Bethnal Green Branch N.S.S. please note the name and address of the new Secretary is Mr. C. Samuels, 436 Hackney Road, London, E.2, who is very keen on getting the Branch into full working order and usefulness. Meetings are held every Sunday afternoon in Victoria Park, at 3.15, and all interested in the movement in that area are asked to get in touch with the Secretary.

The unfortunate condition of the coal industry leaves the miner and pit workers with a deal of spare time. The Ashington and District Branch of the N.S.S. is trying to form a Branch Library as a means of usefully employing the spare time of its members and friends. Gifts of suitable books would be gratefully received by the local Secretary, Mr. J. H. English, 7 Railway Row, North Seaton Colliery, Newbiggin-by-the-Sea, Northumberland.

Mr. G. Whitehead reports a series of good meetings in Birmingham, at which Messrs. Smith, Millington and Dobson gave very useful help. Swansea is now the centre of activity, and with a decided keenness in the revived local Branch Mr. Whitehead contemplates some real good work being done during his visit. From Swansea the tour will be extended to Cardiff, where Mr. Whitehead will address meetings at Pentyrech Street, Cathays, from August 29 until September 2, at 7.30 each evening.

Some surprise was recently expressed that a man of Dr. Orchard's personality should contemplate becoming a Roman Catholic priest. How can any man of intelligence occupy the position, the *ex-officio* position, in which every priest finds himself. If the late Father Tyrrell is to be believed—and he was noted for his veracity—that position is as follows:—

The Catholic priest is but the Church's delegate. Every word that he utters at the altar, nay, every little gesture and intonation is prescribed for him by the Christian republic not merely of to-day, but of the ages past; and even though the setting be his own, yet the doctrine that he sets forth in the pulpit is not his own, but that of the Church who sent him, whose mouth-piece he is. Were he a reprobate or an unbeliever he might be guilty of sacrilege in preaching and praying, but not of insincerity or hypocrisy since he is understood to speak not in his own name but in the Church's. The very vestments in which she blots out his personality when he approaches the altar are an indication of her desire that in his official work he should put off himself and put on the Church. (*Hard Sayings*, p. 405.)

Comment would be superfluous.

EXPEDIENCE.

In writtin' a man should go tollable strong
Agin wrong in the abstract, fer that kind o' wrong
Is ollers unpop'lar an' never gits pitied
Because its a crime no one never committed:
But he mus'n't be hard on pertickler sins
Coz then he'll be kickin' the people's own shins.

J. R. Lowell.

Criticism and the Bible.

WAS YAHWE ORIGINALLY A NATIONAL GOD?

II.

THAT the mode of life of the Hebrews must have been comparable with the mode of life of the old Arabs, follows from the fact of their similar organization in tribes and families. Among the Arabians before, and at the time of, Mohammed, the tribe was divided into a number of gentes or totem groups called Botun (singular, Batn) meaning the belly, since the members of those gentes considered themselves as having sprung out of one and the same maternal belly. Hence, those belonging to the same gens or batn were known as Lohum, meaning, "of like flesh." Most of those botun were named after animals, like the gentes of the North American Indians. We find frequently mentioned gentes or botun with the names Asad (the lion), Jada (sheep), Hamama (dove), Bakr (young camel), etc., etc. Each such batn had its ancestor god, who was often thought of in the form of the animal after which the batn called itself, or who at least temporarily took the form of this animal. He was held to be the father of his batn, and all the related people in the batn were considered to be his posterity. Consequently, they characterized themselves as the progeny of their ancestor god; for example, "Banu" Asad, the children of the lion, "Banu" Jada, children of the sheep, etc. The word "Banu" has in this sense the same meaning as the Welsh "Ap," or the Scottish "Mac," or the Irish "O," as for example "Ap Rhys," the son of Rhys; Macdonald, the son of Donald; O'Brien, the son of Brien; only "Banu" is plural and designates the whole of the descendants.

Every batn was in turn divided into a number of smaller kinship groups called "Hayy," which may be regarded as households and camps (strictly, the word means common life), and which correspond to the patriarchal large families that we find among most of the nomad peoples. Each hayy had its leader (family patriarch), as well as its household or family ancestor-god. Within the larger circles of the tribe and gens, it possessed its particular grazing place and watering place. All the members of the "hayy" were held to be closely blood-related with one another and had among other obligations that of mutual assistance and blood-revenge.

The old Hebrew kinship-organization corresponds precisely to that of the old Arabs. The Hebrew tribe (Shebet) was divided into a number of larger and smaller gentes (mispacha) which, in turn, were subdivided into a number of smaller units. This smaller organization was known as the house of the father or father's house. The author of the ninth chapter of the Book of Judges, speaks of "Abimelech the son of Jerub-baal," who "went to Shechem unto his mother's brethren, and communed with them, and with all the family of the house of his mother's father."¹³

How these gentes were constituted at the time of the desert life, we do not know; but still we know that in the first centuries after the settlement in Canaan, each mispacha had its particular district, which was under the direction of the chief of the gens, and its particular gentile or local god. The mispacha was at the same time a gentile, a territorial and a cult association. We find these gentes mentioned in many places in the Book of Moses, particularly Genesis, as

¹³ Judges ix. 1. Compare also 1 Kings viii. 1. The expressions "mother's brethren" and "mother's father" in the quotation from Judges, refer to the practice of the matrilineal reckoning of descent which preceded the patrilineal.

well as in the Books of Judges, Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles. Take, for example, a passage in the Book of Samuel:—

. . . Now therefore present yourselves before the Lord by your tribes, and by your thousands.

And when Samuel had caused all the tribes of Israel to come near, the tribe of Benjamin was taken.

When he had caused the tribe of Benjamin to come near by their families, the family of Matri was taken, and Saul the son of Kish was taken: . . .¹⁴

In this very explicit and typical description, we see that, first, the tribe is drawn out, then the gens from the tribe—the gens Matri—and then out of one of the patriarchal households of the gens—Kish—the individual, Saul, is selected.

In the preceding chapter, as also in the first chapter of the same book, there are passages referring to the territorial aspect of the mispacha. "The land of Zuph" was the district of the mispacha "Zuph."¹⁵ For the fact that the mispacha was a religious association, there are also many corroborating passages, the most interesting of which is to be found in the first Book of Samuel, in verses six and twenty-nine of the twentieth chapter. David requests his closest friend Jonathan to excuse his absence to King Saul:—

If thy father at all miss me, then say, David earnestly asked leave of me that he might run to Beth-lehem his city; for there is a yearly sacrifice there for all the family.

Jonathan duly conveyed David's excuse to his father, namely, that David's mispacha was celebrating a gentile sacrifice in the native place of this gens, and that his gentile brethren had summoned him to join in the celebration. What kind of gentile gods these were, the cited passages unfortunately do not say. But it is clear enough from other passages that they are to be understood as the teraphim.

Yet another characteristic passage with reference to the existence of the local gentile cult, is contained in the twenty-sixth chapter of the first Book of Samuel, verse nineteen. David is complaining bitterly to Saul because the latter continued to persecute him, so that he was compelled to leave his native place and seek refuge among strangers.

For they have driven me out this day from abiding in the inheritance of the Lord, saying, "Go serve other gods."

To leave the land of his mispacha, to be an exile among strangers, was equivalent to leaving his gods and serving other gods. A world-god can be worshipped anywhere. A national god of the monotheistic type, as Yahwe is claimed to have been, would have been accessible anywhere, at least "from Dan to Beersheba." That was not, however, the kind of god which is at stake in such passages as those cited. Here we have before us a cult which is inseparably bound up, not with a nation but with a tribal or kinship group and the place where this group lived. The basis of a nation or state is territory and property. It is a political organization. The basis of a gens or mispacha is kinship. A national god is a political god. The god of a gens is an ancestor-god. Only those can worship him who are of him, of his blood, i.e., of the gens.

The members of the Hebrew mispacha, like those of its Arabian counterpart, the batn, regarded themselves as blood-related and pledged to blood-revenge. Similarly, they derive their existence from a common original ancestor who, as the word "el" which was often appended to his names shows, was thought of as a god. The members of the mispacha considered themselves as the posterity of this god. However, the

¹⁴ 1 Samuel x. 19, 20, 21. The term "families," signifies a gens or mispacha, therefore, the tribe of Benjamin came near, by their gentes.

¹⁵ 1 Samuel ix. 5: i. 1.

word, Beni, which is used in the Hebrew and which corresponds to the sense of the Arabian word, Banu, was applied not only to the posterity of the original ancestor of the gens but also to the whole of a tribe. Time and again, we come across expressions in the Old Testament, such as, Beni-Juda, Beni-Joseph, Beni-Naphtali, Beni-Dan, Beni-Gad, Beni-Israel and, among others, even Beni-Yahwe. In the English translation of the Bible, these expressions are mostly translated with the words, children of Judah, children of Joseph, and so on. The expressions characterize the entire descendants of a tribal father, or tribal mother, as in the cases, for example, of Beni-Leah, and Beni-Rachel.

Under the title, Beni-Yahwe, children of Yahwe, is to be understood not only the mere worshippers of Yahwe in the Biblical meaning of the word, but *the posterity directly produced by him*, in exactly the same way as the Beni-Chemosh are to be understood as the flesh-and-blood progeny of the god of the Moabites, Chemosh, or the Beni-Milcom as those of Milcom, the god of the Ammonites. In the so-called "Song of Moses" in Deuteronomy, it is still asked:—

"Is not he (Yahwe) thy father that hath bought thee?
Hath he not made thee, and established thee?"¹⁶

In another part of the Hebrew constitution we find the "house of the father" or patriarchal large family, large, in contradistinction to the modern single family. To this large family belonged, besides the father of the house with his wives and children, also his sons and grandsons with their wives and children, as well as the servants and slaves, at least in as far as the latter were circumcized and therefore qualified for participation in the Passover.¹⁷ In those family households the "father" was absolute lord and master. Wives and children were looked upon as his property. He could turn his wife away and sell his children as slaves, when it suited him. He appears, in the oldest times, to have even had the right of punishing a refractory son by killing him. This right was in the course of time more and more circumscribed, and finally transferred to a judicial body.¹⁸

According to the legend, Moses introduced into the constitution of his people a division according to thousands, hundreds and tens.¹⁹ In any case, this arrangement stood in the closest connexion with the kinship organization. Some Christian and Jewish theologians take the view that this division is only to be regarded as one of a military character, like the modern division of armies into divisions, brigades and battalions. That assumption is contradicted by the account given in the Bible, where this division appears, not as a military preparation but as an institution for administrative purposes; and there are, furthermore, several other passages in the Old Testament which confirm this account, and in which the "thousand" is specifically mentioned as an administrative district. Micah speaks of Beth-lehem being the smallest "among the thousands of Judah."²⁰ Amos predicts that "the city that went out by the thousand shall leave an hundred, and that which went forth as a hundred shall leave ten."²¹ In the chapter in the first Book of Samuel to which we have already drawn attention, the expression "thousand" is used as co-extensive with *mispacha*. We may, therefore, with security assume that just as was the case with other peoples, of whom we have had evidence that

they possessed this division into thousands, hundreds and tens, *e.g.*, Tatars and old Peruvians, so with the Hebrews this division coincided with the gentile structure, the tens corresponding to the paternal households, the hundreds to the smaller or daughter gentes, and the thousands to the larger or mother gentes (*phratries*).

If, then, at the time of their nomad career, the Hebrews were not constituted as a nation but were split up into tribes and gentes, all talk about their having a national god, Yahwe, and about their being organized in the desert into a nation with a uniform law and a unitary cult, is simply idle tittle-tattle. Nowhere in the world have such shepherd-peoples been found united into a durable national organization. Even the tribe itself is, in many cases, a fairly loose structure, especially where geographical conditions—in relation to the existing economy and technique—are unfavourable to a close and continuous intercourse between the individual kinship groups. The gravitating centre lies in the gens or large family. The claim therefore that the Hebrews while they were living in the desert as herdsmen had worshipped a national god, amounts to the same thing as asserting that while the Hebrews were not as yet a nation, they had, nevertheless, a national god. With that kind of freakish logic one could assert that before there were trade unions there were trade-union officials, or that before there were houses there were towns!

W. CRAIK.

(To be concluded.)

On Zeal for Trifles.

ZEAL and bigotry are a case of being "alike, but oh how different." One is a necessity of all propagandist effort, the other is a bane of many good causes. Now-a-days there is no excess of zeal, especially in advanced causes. Some readers may recall a scene in Richard Whiteing's *Ring in the New*, in which one old Chartist, who was "out" at Kennington Common, tells some home truths to a polite assembly of drawing-room Socialists. "You're all right, mates," he said, "You've got the learning, you 'ave. You can read books in French, I'm told; aye, and talk like books on your own account. You've got the starch in yer; and the way you carry your upper lip is a sight to see. But 'ow about your entrails? Are ye ready to fight for it?" Zeal, however, is not only a characteristic of fighting. It may be displayed to better purpose in reasoned passivity. In this aspect of courage to stand alone it is rare, and sometimes more a matter of discretion than of dogma as in the case of the cobbler sticking to his last. A good example of this may be found in Dr. Irvine's sketches of *Ulster Folk*. He found a cobbler in Belfast who declined to be interested in either King William or the Pope, that is to say, in the sectarian feuds of his neighbours. He was asked "How'd ye like t'live undther th' rule of th' Pope?" And replied, "If th' Queen liv'd at wan end or th' street, and th' Pope at th' other, it wou'dn't make onny difference t'me. Their ould boots wud never come down our entry t'git mended."

Many are they who have zeal but not according to knowledge. Zealous folk of this sort may easily be swept from one enthusiasm to another according to the prevalent wind, and opportunists, eager upon the chance of the moment, may have any amount of zest, but nothing that can be dignified as zeal. Such zealots hold only that cynical creed of which the author of the *Biglow Papers* has given several adequate descriptions:—

"... ther's a wonderful power in latitude

To shift a man's morril relations an' attitude;

Some flossifiers think thet a fakilly's granted

The minnit it's proved to be thoroughly wanted,

Thet a change o' demand makes a change o' condition,

An' thet everythin's nothin' except by position."

¹⁶ Deuteronomy xxxii. 6.

¹⁷ The "sacrament of the Lord's Supper" or "holy communion" is a Christianized edition of the Jewish "passover."

¹⁸ Deuteronomy xxi. 18-21.

¹⁹ Exodus xviii. 21-26.

²⁰ Micah v. 2.

²¹ Amos v. 3. "Went out" in the sense of *began*, and "leave" in the sense of *end*.

Again,

" . . . never say nothin' without you're compelled to,
An' then don't say nothin' that you can be held tu'."
Even the most zealous of political partizans are not impervious to the principle that

" The fust thing for sound politicians to larn is,
Thet Truth, to dror kindly in all sorts o' harness,
Mus' be kep' in the abstract for, come to apply it,
You're ept to hurt some folks's interists by it."

Is it not the case that a clear comprehension of free-thinking is at once a great impetus to zeal in its highest signification, and a sure safeguard against both bigotry and that false "loyalty" which is the main ingredient of spurious and shallow enthusiasm? Once a man has recognized that, while there can be no limit to the march of human knowledge, there are obvious limits to the knowledge which one man can acquire, he will be careful to preserve the sense of intellectual and controversial proportion. He will leave faddists and fanatics to wrangle about matters of no account with those who have nothing better to do. He will keep to the main road, more concerned with the destination than with the scenery by the way. Time will not allow, and temper will not incline to turning up every crooked lane or to examine every antique delapidation en route. These may be attended to when we are free to ramble at leisure, and give an hour to aught that may chance. But the main road (especially in these days when mental as well as material traffic increases in bulk and pace), is no place for ramblers.

Freethought, above all causes, demands and provides for its service a zeal which is not perverted or diverted by the minor irrelevances and intolerances of political and theological disputation. In its contentions we may indeed

" do as adversaries do in law
Strike mightily, but eat and drink as friends."

but with the difference that, unlike lawyers, our contentions are concerned not with the rights of persons who have conflicting claims on our services, but with those rights of men more fundamental than any conferred or conferable by law. The main object of law is to restrain liberty. The essence of Freethought is to maintain and to extend it. It is little enough that anyone of us can accomplish at best, and if "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty," the highest zeal in its service is that difficult and steady persistence which is superior to all the effervescent enthusiasms artificially stimulated by transitory "stunts," dying "creeds" and rancid tyrannies.

The distinction between a zealous Freethinker and a zealous Christian, or a zealous politician, is that one is concerned first with ideas while the others are concerned first with their own ideas. The only intolerance that is not evil is the intolerance of Truth; the intolerance of the sectarian, religious or secular, is the intolerance of trifles. And how much time some otherwise worthy folk fritter away on the latter. To them we commend the fine indifference set forth in one of the raciest books ever written in our language, *Tristram Shandy*. "Sir, have not the wisest of men in all ages, not excepting Solomon himself, have they not had their hobby horses—their running horses—their coins and their cockle shells, their drums and their trumpets, their fiddles and their pallets—their maggots and their butterflies?—and so long as a man rides his hobby horse peaceably and quietly along the King's highway, and neither compels you or me to get up behind him—pray, Sir, what have either you or I to do with it?"

ALAN HANDSACRE.

To subject the vast majority to despotic regimentation by reason of the shortcomings of the few, is foolish tyranny.—*The late H. M. Hyndman.*

The great danger of twentieth century biography is its unwillingness to accept any man's character save at the valuation of his most cautious relatives.

Sir Edmond Gosse.

Bronte Sisters—Heretics.

(Concluded from page 524.)

THIS quiet clergyman's daughter, always hearing evil of Dissenters, at last became a broad dissentient herself. She was sensitive to the stupidities and tight-laced conventional opinion that passed for culture on the gusty uplands of West Yorks. She was prepared to acknowledge to herself the unlikeness of life to the orthodox presentation of life, and she certainly perceived the final conqueror of evil in the slow course of the evolving processes of nature, and the reward that conduct of life brings to him that lives true to himself. Listen to her stoical assertion that rings more honest than might be thought possible for the daughter of an Irish religious man, were she not brave in her apostasy:—

Through life's hard task I did not ask
Celestial aid, celestial cheer:
I saw my fate without its mask,
And met it too without a tear.

The instinct inbred in her to revolt from the Calvinism was however imperfect, and her life too restricted for her to be aware of the great changes that were drawing on a religious tormented world. From her Calvinism Emily learned that every unchecked evil tendency must bring its expiation, but for her punishment was not a cure; the cure was to be found in the correction of perverted instincts of childhood. Evil stock will only bring evil human contamination, and God she felt, who was the fount of life, would not condemn to everlasting fire the innocent "lost."

The eldest daughter of the Bronte family was only five years of age when her father took up his ministry at Haworth, that old parsonage with an overcrowded graveyard, dull in environment and melancholy, fit school for the breeding of ineradicable religious tendencies. Her two sisters were born in the parsonage, and there her mother died.

For long periods she was closely immersed in the inner life of the house as housekeeper. Life was cheerless enough. The inexorably strict father disciplined them well, and for relaxation they had a walk across the solitary moors with their dog.

Charlotte's adventures were tinged deeply with ecclesiasticism. She found her curate Donne, in the novel *Shirley*, in the person of the Rev. Joseph Brett of Oxenhope village, who wore his shoes out in tramping the country-side to gather subscriptions for his church; then too, she had an adventure, or what would be one in those days, with the young Irish curate of Christ Church near Colne, away over the moors. She married the Rev. A. B. Nicholls, a good ordinary man, to whom she protested in her last moment that:—

"He will not separate us; we have been so happy."

Dutifully the sisters taught in the drab Sunday School which fronts the graveyard, and one can imagine the tenor of their Sundays: Church, dinner, Sunday School, a walk, tea, some reading in the Bible or Bunyan, Shakespeare maybe, Scott, Addison and the contemporary poets and preachers whose works found their way to the parsonage.

When Charlotte's mind had matured its conceptions of those religious matters it rested halfway between the positions of her two sisters. When one reads her outspoken condemnation of the results of Roman Catholicism, which she had the opportunity of studying at the Pensionnat at Brussels, one may deduct much because of her tight Protestant upbringing, but still there will remain a large amount of truth detached from partisanship. Possibly, too, Charlotte, by her Brussels experiences came nearest to obtaining a broad view of Christianity, and certainly her attitude in after life was never other than tolerant to the minor "Protestants." She looked with a critical eye on the Church of England, doubtless judging over-greatly by those representatives of that Church that surrounded her: "God preserve it! God also reform it!" she exclaims in *Shirley*. And again she could hardly refrain from being candid about those same representatives: "They seem to me a self-seeking,

vain, empty race," she remarks almost despisively. Charlotte, too, was immersed in the narrow Protestantism of Bronteland without adequate outlet for her deep private opinions, but it is on record that her shyness was once cast aside to sharply rebuke three famous curates who began to glorify themselves and abusing the Dissenters.

She bowed to the common opinion of her times by supposing that man cannot walk alone. "Ignorance, weakness, or indiscretion must have their props—they cannot walk alone. Let them hold by what is purest in doctrine and simplest in ritual; something they must have." But this sentence rather shows her willingness to help than to crush the weaker brethren.

Her favourite divines were Arnold and Maurice, probably under the influence of the times more than she realized, for she called the Athanasian Creed "profane," and drew the line at this formulary while protesting attachment to the Church of England.

It was the remarks in *Villette* on Romanism that raised the displeasure of the High Church party and expressed through the organs *Guardian*, *English Churchman*, and the *Christian Remembrancer*. She says that, "I cannot suffer no accusation to oppress me much which is not supported by the inward evidence of conscience and reason."

Of course a great cry went up at the attack on popery and although, as Charlotte protested, the cry was unexpectedly acrimonious, she held her ground.

"Mr. White thinks me a much hotter advocate for change and what is called 'political progress' than I am," she writes, thus revealing herself clearly as one having the intent, if of but a less hot character.

There is no doubt that her strict training in childhood coloured her views of what she called Continental morals and of Catholicism. Had she been born in France her concepts would have been very different, and this antipathy to Belgians and their life displayed in her *Villette* was the weakest link in her armour of progressive.

In the poem entitled "Memory," which is full of the pantheistic ideas of Emily's poetry, Charlotte gave expression worthy of her powers of composition to this hidden side of her character.

Withal the three sisters were shy, reticent, and aloof. They brooded, imagined and poured over the contrast between the depravity and horror of life and the false religious versions and so, they secretly snapped the bonds of religious upbringing and were at heart heretics.

Though her God bade her leave go of life, Charlotte was not ill-content and her last message was that of the still defiant warrior:—

Well, thou hast fought for many a year,
Hast fought thy whole life through,
Hast humbled Falsehood, trampled Fear;
What is there left to do?

When we remember that the Brontes were living and writing in the mid-Victorian period, and that Charlotte passed away only four years before the clarion call to fight between tradition and freedom with the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species* in 1859, and that they had not worked out philosophy of revolt such as appeared before the end of the century, before the days of emancipation, when they had to look upon marriage for the only chance of independence, we can only marvel and admire that they advanced so far on the path of intellectual freedom.

Beneath their subterranean depths all was turbulent questioning and heart-searching, but their characters, time and opportunities were not the ones to bring about the revolt, and the fierce torrent came forth in the channels open for its escape—in their works.

I. CORINNA.

... the man remains
Sceptreless, free, uncircumscribed, but man
Equal, unclassed, tribeless and nationless,
Exempt from awe, worship, degree, the king
Over himself.

P. B. Shelley.

Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SCIENCE AND INTOLERANCE.

SIR,—Thank you so much for your helpful comments on my letter. Will you allow me space for one or two queries. First as to Canon Copernicus (who would have been very annoyed with you for dropping the "Canon"), you forget that his book owed its publication very largely to the active interest displayed by Cardinal Shömberg and the Bishop of Culm, and that the book itself was dedicated to Pope Paul III. None of the nine Popes that followed objected to the book, and Galileo himself would never have been touched but for the unfortunate fact that the papal chair was occupied at a later date by a scientist. This Pope fancied himself as an astronomer, and wrote a book refuting the Copernican document and his vanity was hurt by Galileo's refusal to be impressed. Actually on the evidence then available, the Pope had a good case. "I looked into the matter when I was in Italy," wrote Huxley, "and came to the conclusion that the Pope and the College of Cardinals had rather the better of it."

I am prepared to go to the stake for my theory that the persecution of Galileo is a case of the persecution of a pioneer by a conservative scientist, but this thesis would be as easy to prove as your thesis that all cases of scientific persecution can be explained by the fact that most scientists are religious (Are they?).

You forget that all human beings, whether they be parsons or scientists, tend to be conservative. Moreover all members of Trade Unions, scientific or religious, hang together and resent unconventional intruders. Again envy, most potent of influences, tends to make scientists resent originality. Remember the boycott of Samuel Butler because he dared to attack the scientific pundits of his day. Can this boycott be explained by the deep religious feeling of Huxley and Darwin? Read the lives of Harvey, of Stenson, of Ohm. Read what their scientific contemporaries said of Pasteur and Jenner. No, Sir, your explanation is crudely superficial. We must dig deeper to find the true cause of scientific persecution.

You are wrong in saying that all Christian apologists "stress the fact that the majority of scientific men are religious." This fact—if it be a fact—is only of importance for the light that it throws on the alleged "conflict between science and religion."

I have recently been challenged by the R.P.A. to debate with Mr. Cohen the thesis that the modern scientific developments are favourable to religion. I replied that I neither know nor cared what bearing modern science has on religion. If modern science is becoming religious, so much the better—for science. I am hoping that Mr. Cohen will accept instead my challenge to debate "That Materialism is the suicide of thought."

Your view that the assumption of power by an irreligious State marks an end of persecution does not seem to be borne out by the facts. Russia, which was the first great country officially to adopt Materialism as a State creed, has savagely persecuted Christianity. We still await the protest of the *Freethinker* against the anti-religious persecutions of Russia and Mexico.

I owe the *Freethinker* an apology for failing to reply to the long and interesting attack on my book *The Flight from Reason*, which appeared in your columns. The easy superior line of ignoring criticism is not a line which I favour. I was desperately busy at the time, but in the introduction to the new and enlarged edition of that book, I have done my best to turn the other cheek. And I hope the *Freethinker*, when the revised edition appears will do its best to produce a symmetrical effect on both cheeks.

ARNOLD LUNN.

NOTE TO A CRITICISM.

SIR,—The compiler of your "Acid Drops" is good enough, in your August 14 issue, to devote two paragraphs to my humble self. May I make some remarks on his candid criticism?

It is true that many of my contributions to the Press (which are by no means restricted to letters) deal with Roman Catholicism; but I do not by any means confine myself to that subject. However, even supposing I restricted myself to Roman Catholicism, would that necessarily be a crime? If one has special knowledge of a subject, should one not use it to spread accurate information? By the way, I do not make myself a "judge" as to what is right, in the sense of placing myself on a pedestal. While stating what I believe accurate, I am always open to correction when mistaken. However, as I make it a rule to write only what I have taken pains to verify, I am generally correct.

By the way, I never "returned" to the Anglican Church. I never belonged to it or any Church before being a Roman Catholic.

If some of my letters seem more indefinite than "Acid Drops" would wish, that may be because I aim at bringing out facts rather than waging a sectional warfare. I have seen so much narrow-minded sectarianism of all kinds that I think a little impartial fact-stating does good.

J. W. POYNTER.

JURIES.

SIR,—At the foot of page 417 issue of August 14, Mr. Lincoln Gray informs your readers that "No British subject will lightly abandon any institution which may subserve the cause of individual liberty or popular rights."

This is a cheering assurance. Your readers will be grateful. Without it, and by merely studying current events, they might have arrived at an exactly opposite conclusion.

ROBERT HARDING.

SIR,—Lincoln Gray says that to deprive an accused person of the right of trial by jury would be a retrograde step.

Why? As one who disbelieves in juries and lay magistrates, I respectfully beg to differ.

It seems to me that the decision of either a civil or a criminal case is best left in the hands of a jury of judges—trained lawyers—whose lives have been devoted to the sifting of evidence.

IGNOTUS.

Obituary.

MRS. SAMUEL PULMAN.

WE regret to learn, although in an indirect manner, of the death of Mrs. Samuel Pulman, whose husband's decease was recorded in these columns about a year ago. Both Mr. and Mrs. Pulman were members of the Manchester Branch until they removed to Eastbourne, and were good workers for the Cause. We record the fact of Mrs. Pulman's death for the information of the older Manchester Freethinkers.

Goodness of nature may do little good: Perfection of memory may serve to small use: All love may be soon gravated if a man trust always to his own singular wit, and will not be glad sometime to hear, take and learn of another.—Roger Ascham (1515-1568).

All are born to observe laws; few are born to establish them.—Carlyle.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

LONDON,

OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N.S.S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand): 3.15, Mr. H. S. Wishart—"Christian Superstition an Evil Broth."

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (White Stone Pond, Hampstead): 11.30, Sunday, August 21, Mr. F. P. Corrigan. Monday, August 22, South Hill Park, Hampstead, 8.0, Mr. C. Tuson. Thursday, August 25, Leighton Road, Kentish Town, 8.0, Mr. L. Ebury.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Brockwell Park): 6.30, Sunday, August 21, Mr. L. Ebury. Wednesday, August 24, Cock Pond, Clapham Old Town, 8.0, Mr. F. P. Corrigan. Friday, August 26, Streatham Common, 8.0, Mr. C. Tuson.

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

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): Wednesday, August 17, at 7.30, Messrs. Tuson and Wood. Thursday, August 18, at 7.30, Mr. E. C. Saphin. Friday, August 19, at 7.30, Messrs. Bryant and Le Maine. Sunday, August 21, 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 AND DISTRICT BRANCH N.S.S. (Beresford Square): 7.45, Thursday, August 18, Messrs. R. James, J. Read and S. Burke. "The Ship," Plumstead Common, 7.45, Friday, August 19, Messrs. J. Read and A. D. McLaren. Beresford Square: 7.45, Sunday, August 21, Messrs. R. James and F. P. Corrigan. Lakedale Road: 7.45, Monday, August 22, Messrs. J. Read and S. Burke. "The Ship," Plumstead Common, 7.45, Wednesday, August 24, Messrs. S. Burke and G. Mead.

COUNTRY.

OUTDOOR.

BLACKBURN MARKET, 7.0, Sunday, August 21, Mr. J. Clayton.

BRIGHTON BRANCH N.S.S. (The Level, opposite Open Market): 7.30, Friday, August 19, Chair—J. T. Byrne. Speaker—J. Cecil Keast. Subject—"Is Christianity True." Members and sympathizers please support.

DARLINGTON (Market Steps): 7.0, Tuesday, August 23, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

LIVERPOOL (Merseyside BRANCH N.S.S. (Queen's Drive opposite Walton Baths): 8.0, Sunday, August 21, Messrs. H. Little and D. Robinson. Tuesday, August 23, Edge Hill Lamp, 8.0, Messrs. H. Little, P. Sherwin and F. S. Wollen. Thursday, August 25, corner of High Park Street and Park Road, 8.0, Messrs. A. Jackson and J. V. Shortt. Current *Freethinkers* on sale at all meetings.

LUMB-IN-ROSENDALE, 7.30, Friday, August 19, Mr. J. Clayton.

NELSON (Carr Road): 8.0, Tuesday, August 23, Mr. J. Clayton.

NEWHIGGIN-BY-SEA, 6.30, Sunday, August 21, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE BRANCH N.S.S. 7.30, Sunday, August 21, Mr. R. Atkinson, A Lecture.

RISHTON, 3.30, Sunday, August 21, Mr. J. Clayton.

SEAHAM HARBOUR (Church Street): 8.0, Saturday, August 20, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

SOUTH SHIELDS (Market Place): 7.0, Wednesday, August 24, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

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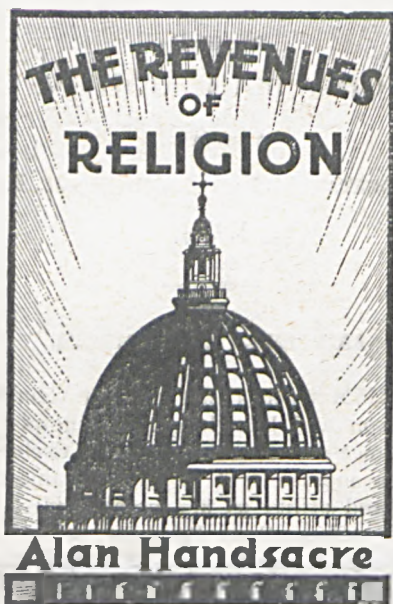
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