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PRINCIPAL CONTENTS.

	Page
<i>The World Without Religion.—The Editor</i>	641
<i>Fuel for an Old Bonfire.—Mimmermus</i>	643
<i>Can Science Discover God?—C. S. Fraser</i>	644
<i>"The Truth of the Bible."—H. Cutner</i>	645
<i>The Broad-Branching Sylvan Oak.—T. F. Palmer</i>	650
<i>Democritus and Modern Science.—G. H. Taylor</i>	651
<i>Christianity's Creditors.—Ignotus</i>	652
<i>"Powder and Shot."—G.F.G.</i>	653

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

Views and Opinions.

The World Without Religion.

MESSRS. VICTOR GOLLANCZ have just issued a useful volume under the title of *An Outline for Boys and Girls and their Parents*. For once in a way the title of a book is fully justified. For it is not merely a work through which an intelligent child of twelve may wander with interest and profit, but we believe that seventy-five per cent of adults could read it with profit—provided that their capacity for reading anything above the variegated emptiness of their morning papers has not robbed them of the capacity for decent reading. The work extends to 928 pages, and is well illustrated, the illustrations in turn being admirably adapted to serve the purpose of the whole work. Nearly all the writers are well-known to the general public, some of them are high authorities on the subjects with which they deal, and the work is under the general editorship of Mrs. Naomi Mitchison. It is a book that we confidently recommend to all who are on the look-out—or who ought to be on the look-out—for a simple outline of knowledge on most of the subjects which interest intelligent folk. The price of the book is 8s. 6d. We strongly commend it to all who wish to have at hand a low-priced work dealing with present-day teachings free from the mistake of taking a scientific catalogue for instructions in science, and are not afraid to study the tendency of current thought.

One word of criticism may be said. The first half of the book is well done, indeed better done than any other book with which we are acquainted that sets out to educate, rather than to instruct. The second part, which deals with sociological questions and what the book roughly classifies under the head of "Values" leans rather more to *instruction* and over-emphasizes particular points of view, to the exclusion of their opposite. We should have preferred that it had been left to the child—from twelve to sixty—to make up his or her own mind, and to have indicated the

material for so doing and sound methods of doing so. After all it is important to recognize that there is no such thing as finality in social or artistic developments, any more than there is in scientific knowledge. In all these things it is the method of investigation, the spirit of enquiry, that are important, and we should have preferred to have seen this thoroughly exemplified right through the book.

But while the book is so good it has, according to a review in the *News-Chronicle*, one serious blemish. The writer of the review is Dr. C. W. Kimmins, a late Inspector of Education under the L.C.C. The review itself is headed "An Outline of Everything—except Religion." I do not know whether this heading is due to a sub-editor, or to Mr. Kimmins himself. But it might well be by Dr. Kimmins, because he complains it is "unfortunate" that in such a book there is given the impression "of a definite tendency to boycott religion." I admit it is quite a startling innovation to find in this priest-ridden country, and in a work intended for the consumption of youth, that religion is left completely outside. Perhaps it is a sign of the times. Perhaps the editor leans to the opinion of the great Augustus that the Gods should be left to protect their own honour and to look after themselves. At any rate, a God who cannot do this is hardly worth bothering about.

* * *

Teaching the Young.

I suggest that the explanation for this omission is that of Laplace who, when Napoleon said that in his astronomical teaching he had said nothing about God, remarked, "God is not necessary to my hypothesis." For, really there is not one of the twenty-odd subjects dealt with that has any essential reference to God. It is true that with all of them religion has been mixed up. But the business of a teacher, as I have so often pointed out, is that of separating the essential from the non-essential. Religion has utilized music, and painting, and architecture, and geology, and many other things, but there is none of these things that cannot do without religion and which are not the better for it. And for once in a way a couple of dozen writers, who set out to instruct and educate the young try to fix the eyes of their pupils on what really matters in the subject they are studying. True, this conduct is something of an innovation—as new as would be a politician who spoke the truth, a parson who really knew and told the truth about religion, or a newspaper that was conducted without an eye on the advertisers. The ordinary plan is to get writers who, often with their tongues in their cheeks, give the students to understand that in every subject it is the cultivation of religion that matters. Someone ought to write a book on the necessity of preventing the young finding out the truth. I am quite sure that if it were given some such title as "The Value of Established Truth," it would receive the enthusiastic

support of a large number of leading men from the Archbishop of Canterbury downward—or upward.

* * *

Are We Religious?

Take, for instance, the reasons Dr. Kimmins gives in order to justify his complaint:—

We are naturally a religious people. Religious instruction forms part of the curriculum in our State schools. It is so firmly established that, although differences of opinion naturally exist as to the exact nature of the religious instruction, any attempt to introduce the secular system in its place would not have the faintest chance of success. In thousands and tens of thousands of homes, moreover, religion is the most precious element in family life.

Dr. Kimmins has all the disadvantages of the over-zealous advocate. We are so naturally a religious people that it takes the combined efforts of thousands of professional preachers and a general policy of suppression and boycott united in defence of religion to keep a declining proportion of this naturally religious people religious, for even with their activities the number of the non-religious steadily increases. And Dr. Kimmins, who has had experience of educational matters, knows or ought to know that the majority of the parents do not care—when they are left alone by the parsons—whether religion is in the schools or out of it. It is quite probable that if the issue were put to the vote in the country, the majority would vote in favour of a continuance of religious instruction, but that would be mainly because we should have all the parsons hard at work to see that their flocks voted solidly, and bringing to bear the machinery of terrorism and boycott to secure their ends. It is too much to expect Dr. Kimmins to realize that the point in question is not whether we are or are not a religious people, but whether religion is essential to a knowledge of the subjects dealt with in the book he is reviewing. As an instructor Dr. Kimmins represents a very common type—which explains the backwardness of the education of the majority of the population.

* * *

Collar the Kids!

Quite blind to everything save the need of keeping religion before the young, Dr. Kimmins proceeds to give the game away thus:—

If the book were simply intended for adults it would not be such a serious matter, but in the case of boys and girls it is different. It might result in producing the feeling that their religious instruction received in the school is of no use in dealing with very important moral and national questions in after life.

You see, if we are dealing with adults it does not matter letting out the truth that the whole of life can be properly handled without any reference to religion. Adults may be divided into two classes. There is the class that can do without religion, and those who do not know. The latter will probably remain as they are, no matter what is said, the former will not be influenced if they are told they cannot do without religion. So, says Dr. Kimmins, we can tell the truth to them. But with children it is another question. If we do teach them that religion is not necessary to architecture, and music, and science, etc., they will grow up *knowing* that this is true, and where will the churches be then. In any public procession we might well expect to see Dr. Kimmins marching along with a banner bearing the inscription "Collar the Kids." Clearly the work of fooling the adult is made all the easier if one first of all, fools the children.

After all, the question of whether religion is of use in dealing with life is being answered in the negative by even so "naturally a religious people" as our-

selves. There is no necessary reference to religion in any branch of science. And in no official examination for a degree in arts or science, or literature is a belief in religion essential. Our laws do have something to say about religion, but the procedure in the courts is independent of it. There is the religious oath, but that may be dispensed with, and Parliament declared more than a generation since, when it made affirmation legal in every case, that a man may be as truthful, as upright, and as trustworthy without religion as he may be with it. Suppose Dr. Kimmins comes down to facts. Will he be good enough to tell us what branch of life cannot be carried on as well without religion as with it? I wonder whether he will have the courage to answer a straight question.

* * *

Education v. Instruction.

Now suppose that, following the example of those publishers who do not care how much people are misled provided sales are secured, the book now before us had had a section dealing with religion. What form would it have taken? To be perfectly just to the rising generation it should have given both sides of the question. There would have been an article by a reputable parson who would have put the official view. There would also have been another article setting out what is known of the origin and history of religious ideas. It would have pointed out in quite plain language that all existing religious ideas may be traced back to the ideas of savages, and it would have pointed out that these ideas were pure misunderstandings of what are to-day well understood facts. In this respect religious ideas would have been shown to have the same origin and validity as the beliefs in fairies and wizards, and it would have made it quite plain that the course of civilization was of necessity fatal to the animistic interpretation of nature.

Now if this had been done the odds are just a thousand to one that Dr. Kimmins and his kind would have been still more angry than they are at a work claiming to constitute an outline of knowledge for the young, and yet ignoring religion. They would have protested against these views of religion being placed before young people. They would not have thought it wrong to give them views of religion as the truth, although they know quite well they are rejected by millions of people all over the civilized world. They would have said that it is not right to unsettle the mind of the young, although the "unsettlement" is of the same order as teaching that the earth goes round the sun instead of *vice versa*.

In other words the real aim of the type to which Dr. Kimmins belongs is not to educate the young, but merely to instruct them. The aim is to see that children are taught certain beliefs in the hope that they will not discover they are false when they grow old. They are only anxious they shall not question certain accepted views about particular things, and they do their best to take advantage of the ignorance and helplessness of the young in order to effect their aim. The section on religion which Dr. Kimmins would like to have seen in the *Outline* is just the stereotyped lies about religion which those who tell dare not utter before a critical audience of educated men and women.

Bernard Shaw has for one of his plays the title "How She Lied to her Husband." I suggest that these religious instructors might well take as their device a banner "How We Lie to the Children." It would be a plain statement of the work that is done.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

Simplicity of character is the natural result of profound thought.—*Hazlitt*.

Fuel for an Old Bonfire.

"I don't believe in principle,
But Oh I do in interest."

The Pious Editor's Creed.

"Though Priestcraft has been a potent factor in affairs, it could never have availed without a broad foundation of lay incompetence."—*J. M. Robertson.*

THERE are thousands of newspapers and periodicals published in this country, and, in spite of their apparent diversity and rivalry, they are of one mind in suppressing Freethought. Indeed, this conspiracy of silence against freedom of thought is passing wonderful. The newspapers devote columns to the details of the most brutal and disgusting murder cases, and put haloes on miscreants' heads. In the dog-days, when space is very plentiful, the editors print silly articles concerning various phases of religious life. In the worst months of the world-war room was found for lying accounts of angels on horseback on the battlefields; and for alleged happenings to stone statues of the Madonna.

Let there be no mistake on this point. The writers of this trash do not all believe it. It is not entirely due to fanaticism or ignorance, but it is done to "tickle the ears of the groundlings," and so promote those huge circulations, largely based upon crossword, football, and so-called sporting competitions.

It is, in the final analysis, simply a mere trick of commercialism. Journalists, even those from the Emerald Isle, know better than that Freethinkers are all microcephalous idiots or homicidal maniacs, but they wish to curry favour with that elusive personality, the man in the street (and the public house). The imbecilities of the Bishop of London, and of runaway rectors, are reported at length, but the leaders of Freethought seldom have a line devoted to their work, unless it be of slander, disparagement, or misrepresentation.

The result is that readers of newspapers are kept in blissful ignorance of the aims and objects of the "intellectuals," and are served up daily with a rehash of views on religion which were antiquated in the eighteenth century, and are well nigh prehistoric to-day. The glorious free press of England is one of the biggest pieces of humbug existing, for the canker spreads right through journalism from the sober pages of the *Hibbert Journal* to the alleged democratic columns of the *Daily Herald*.

This latter publication recently issued an article, entitled "I did not go to Church," and the editor was so pleased with the pious outburst that he put it in a centre page with an illustration cut in the form of a large crucifix. This charming critic's principal reason for not attending any place of worship is that he believes in Christ and in his divinity, but he is uncertain if this constitutes him a Christian. Maybe, a continuous contemplation of the tangle of the Trinity has been too much for him. There is something the matter with this writer, for he bursts out:—

Articles on the faults of Christianity have been flooding every newspaper office in the world every day in the years since printing began.

The Editor of the *Daily Herald* ought to have known that this purple passage was very remote from the truth. If not, the very office-boy, who empties the waste-paper basket, could have enlightened him. The writer of the article frankly admits that he might find it difficult to pass an examination of the Gospels, but that does not affect his belief. That is the trouble with so many Christians. They are intellectually lazy, knowing little of their own creed, and nothing of the other great faiths of mankind. The schoolboy who laboriously defined "God" as "a sort of a something somewhere," was a great theologian compared

with so many Christians who derive their knowledge of their faith from the recollections of early childhood, and articles on religion written by chorus-girls for Sunday papers. It is about forty years since the columns of the *Daily Telegraph* (London) were open to a discussion on "Is Christianity a Failure?" when Robert Buchanan presented the Freethought position in a series of articles well worth reprinting even to-day. But nothing like it has happened since in an English newspaper, and unkind critics said that the then proprietors were not Christians at all.

So far as the *Herald* article is concerned, the Editor thought this much required answering, and accordingly a professional sky-pilot replied, and his remarks were illustrated by a picture of kneeling multitudes before a very Romish figure of a Christ-child carrying a candle and a wreath of flowers. This clergyman is meekness itself. Parsons ought to be saints. Well! Well! Some finish in barrels as a side show to a penny gaff. He is not disturbed. The Church of Christ is a great ship passing over stormy waters. The previous critic had no right to heave himself overboard.

What sort of a ship is this church? Obviously an ocean liner with many millions of money aboard, and not a "fishing smack" as the writer suggests. As a defender of the Faith once delivered to the saints this parson is no more a success than Henry the Eighth, the old Mormon before Mormonism. He says there is persecution here and now of the faithful few who hand the torch of the Christian Religion on from age to age.

When the Sultan of Zanzibar sent a second-hand tramp-steamer to sink the British fleet, the proceeding added to the gaiety of a jaded world. So does the suggestion of present-day persecution in the mouth of an English State Church parson. Who are the martyrs who are being racked, or burnt alive? Who are the sufferers that are being thrown to the lions? Is it the Archbishop of Canterbury, with £15,000 yearly, and two palaces? Or, is it the bachelor Bishop of London with a beggarly £10,000, a palace and a town-house? Maybe, it is the Bench of Bishops, who share £200,000 yearly, and who have seats in the House of Lords? Perhaps, it is the rectors and vicars of the City of London, who draw £50,000 annually, and have congregations of such microscopical proportions that nineteen of the churches have been declared derelict by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners? Crockford's *Clerical Directory* is not a Book of Martyrs. Indeed, the rectories and vicarages, with their trim lawns and trimmer maidservants, contradict the idea of persecution more than any words.

This verbal sham-fight is thought to be good enough for his readers by the editor of an alleged Democratic newspaper. Does the editor really imagine for a single moment that his tens of thousands of readers are all half-wits, only to be amused by a clown grinning through a horse-collar? Why does he pander to Priestcraft in such a manner? Few worse misfortunes can befall a people than that of possessing a powerful clerical caste in its midst that promotes mental confusion, and that hinders the wheels of progress. The example of the French Republic should be an object lesson. Again and again, the Republicans have been at death grips with the Black Army of priests, who wish for nothing better than the reinstatement of Feudalism and the further triumph of priestcraft and Kingcraft. Priests are as greedy and self-centred as the boy at the seaside, who, playing with spade and pail all the morning, found the tide receded after dinner, and shouted: "Damn it all! Who's got all my water?"

MIMNERMUS.

Can Science Discover God?

THE two sets of quotations which follow should be compared with each other as a whole; and a further comparison should then be made between each quotation in the first set and the quotation bearing the same number in the second set.

SET A—

(1) Religion has been trying these centuries of time to demonstrate the reality of God . . . It has been trying with equal diligence to prove that man is immortal. It has failed in both instances.

(2) When Science announces a discovery, the average man accepts the discovery, because the method of the scientist is not to announce the fact until it has been proved.

(3) In every epoch of the evolution of scientific thought, orthodox religion has been left rather far in the rear.

(4) The methods and deductions of established religion do not inspire confidence.

(5) In brief, orthodox religion does not and cannot speak with authority, though it continues, despite a failing influence, to make *ex cathedra* claims. It cannot present that sort of proof which thoughtful persons to-day require.

SET B.

(1) In reality science cannot help searching for God in every minutest action it makes, because it is a search for reality; and a search for reality always is a search for God.

(2) According to the best in religion, God is a creating, sustaining activity. Between this hypothesis and the hypothesis of contemporary science there is no conflict.

(3) Religion is the parent of research. The prodigal has caused the father much doubt and anxiety. But . . . the son may return at last. At no time in the history of the two movements were they nearer converging than the present.

(4) Religion remains with them (*i.e.*, men of science) the primary concern of mankind.

(5) Religion has not failed to provide consolation and reassurance for multitudes of saddened people. An honest practice and profession of religious faith is the finest act in which humankind can engage.

Having made the requisite comparisons, you will guess that Set A was written by a scientist and Set B by a parson. You will be wrong. Both sets were written by Mr. E. H. Cotton as expressing his own personal views in an introduction (presumably meant to be logically consistent) to a collection of sixteen articles by different scientists. "Hardly believable!" you will say. I agree—but it is true nevertheless. The authors of the articles include such well-known persons as Sir. A. Eddington, Sir J. A. Thomson, Sir J. Jeans, Sir O. Lodge, Albert Einstein, Julian Huxley, R. A. Millikan, W. McDougall, as well as others less well-known in this country. And the title which the compiler of this book has chosen is *Has Science Discovered God?*

Needless to say, the question remains unanswered. It is, indeed, clear from the outset that there was no intention on the part of the compiler, nor of his contributors, to attempt to answer it. And when we read the following extracts from the end of the same introduction, the fact becomes obvious. "May we really tell you why we have gathered the statements which compose this book?" says Mr. Cotton. "We wish to present the summarized conclusions of research to-day concerning the inner spiritual experience, the search for Reality and the life everlasting,

for contemplation by those men and women whose belief in the God-Reality, and in themselves, perchance, may have suffered shock in the recent cynical, naturalistic upheaval and world-wide economic depression."

In simpler language the aim of the book is not to find out whether the verifiable and verified facts of science provide any proof of God's existence or non-existence, but simply to give the minds of religion-befuddled persons some excuse for a continued belief in the main cause of their befuddlement, namely Religion. And this is further confirmed by the naive confession that "the men of research who have contributed directly to this co-operative effort . . . were selected through the process of elimination." Or, in other words, any scientist with known anti-religious views was carefully excluded. Is it to be wondered at that the question "Has Science discovered God?" remains unanswered.

Smiles and tears, it is said, are seldom far apart. As far as this book is concerned, one cannot help being amused and yet depressed at the logical ineptitude of most of the contributors. In every case where God is mentioned at all, it is not the god of any known religion. In every case where Religion is discussed, it is not the religion of any known god or of any known religious sect. Both are the bastard and effete relics of childhood's beliefs, first watered down by positive knowledge acquired in adulthood and then gingered up by the infusion of metaphysical or abstract qualities which have as much relation to the words "God" and "Religion" as Einstein's theory has to the question of War Debts.

"God" according to Mr. K. F. Mather, geologist, is "the motive power which tends to produce a fine personality." But he does not say what is, or what created, the power that tends to produce a brutal personality. For Prof. Huxley "God, in any but a purely philosophical, and one is almost tempted to say, a Pickwickian, sense, turns out to be a product of the human mind." ("Almost tempted" is good!) "The idea of God," says J. A. Thomson, "is or should be the highest expression of man's mind, and it is a fact of history that it has been from time to time refined and enlarged." ("Or should be" is good. "Refined and enlarged" is better!) Sir James Jeans mentions neither God nor Religion. His nearest approach to the former is: "From the intrinsic evidence of his creation, the Great Architect of the Universe now begins to appear as a pure mathematician." As someone once said, when speaking of the innumerable and contradictory definitions of religion: "all these definitions are about as individual and personal as the portraits of the men who forged them."

The general impression given by this book is that of a group of earnest children playing the game of "Hunt the Thimble," with the whole cosmos in which to hunt and with no thimble to hunt for. The inevitable result is that, although none of them finds what he is supposed to be looking for, some of them are convinced they will find a thimble some day; others believe that the thimble is unlike any thimble they know and so proceed to look for a thimble of their own imagination; and the rest, abandoning the search as hopeless, produce something else which is not a thimble, but which they declare to be the very thing they were asked to find. It is really rather pathetic.

Apart from this, what consolations does the book offer to "those men and women whose belief in the God-Reality has suffered shock"? Here are a few of them. "Modern science does not sanction a religion which is based solely upon traditions of the past, or

which looks to magic formulas and miracle-working ordinances as the means of accomplishing its purposes." (K. F. Mather). "The question of what actually is for the common good is the whole stupendous problem of science . . . and has nothing to do with morals or with religion as I am using these words." (R. A. Millikan.) "If you say that your belief in God is final and fixed, that your religious creed is inspired of him, and that no other belief is true, then I shall be offended and refuse to follow you because you are unscientific." (H. D. Curtis.) "No one can furnish scientific proof of the existence or nature of God, but Atheism leads to fatalism and despair, while theism leads to faith and hope and love." (E. J. Conklin.) "I cannot believe in a God who rewards and punishes the objects of his creation . . . Neither can I believe that the individual survives the death of his body, although feeble souls harbour such thoughts through fear or religious egotism." (A. Einstein.) "I am agnostic in the true sense, that is to say I confess that I myself have not found such evidence as convinces me of the truth of the theistic hypothesis." (W. McDougall.) "If individuals seek recreation in other Sunday activities than divine worship, one may feel assured that religious practices of to-day fail to meet the demand for re-creation and inspiration called for by a world re-made by science." (H. T. Stetson.) "There is a growing amount of evidence that human personality does really persist . . . That evidence must be critically examined and subjected to scientific enquiry, and if it stands the test, it must be admitted." (Sir O. Lodge.)

There's consolation for you! And from a group of scientists specially selected for the purpose! Apart from the flatly contradictory beliefs of some of them (compare Conklin with McDougall, and Einstein with Lodge), one wonders what the effect would have been if the compiler had been as impartial in his choice of contributors as his contributors are compelled to be in their own special sciences. An equal number of contributions from eminent scientists holding definitely opposite views—and there are plenty of them—would have made the book worth reading and keeping. The "if" in Sir Oliver Lodge's cautious remark would then have been exposed in its true dimensions, while Conklin's "fatalism and despair" of atheism would have been laughed out of court.

Perhaps one day some enterprising publisher will find it worth his while to commission the production of a book with the title which heads this article. Perhaps he will be broadminded and fearless enough to admit an equal number of opinions representative of both sides of the question. And should this miracle of religious fairness ever occur, I have not the slightest doubt that the answer of every reader, not burdened with childish preconceptions, will be: "No. Because there is no such thing to discover."

C. S. FRASER.

FANCY'S WORLD.

His chamber was dispaunted all within
With sundry colours, in the which were writ
Infinite shapes of things dispers'd thin;
Some such as in the world were never yet;
Some daily seen and knownen by their names,
Such as in idle fantasy do flit;
Infernal hags, centaurs, fiends, hippodames,
Apes, lions, eagles, owls, fools, lovers, children, dames.

Spenser.

"The Truth of the Bible."

(Continued from page 638.)

II.

DR. YAHUDA claims that the Hebrew language developed into a "literary" language from the Canaanite dialect in a "common Hebrew-Egyptian environment," and takes tremendous pains to show that the Joseph narrative is packed with words and meanings which "display most visible traces of the Egyptian influence in the language." To put it in another way. The Israelites—that is about seventy people—took with them the Hebrew language or something like the Hebrew language into Egypt. They then intermingled with the Egyptians and borrowed a lot of words describing all sorts of customs from the Egyptians and incorporated these words into their own language and made it "literary." The writing of the narrative describing their history in Egypt, however, cannot be dated before Ezra. If it can why does not Dr. Yahuda produce the evidence? Where is the "old Hebrew" containing the Joseph story?

The accounts we have are the Samaritan Pentateuch, the date of which is certainly not older than the Maccabees, and the square letter Hebrew known as the Massoretic text, which is the Hebrew text revised, and more or less settled by the Massorites about 600 A.D. and later. We get then the Israelites forming a wonderful "literary" language somewhere about the year 1400 B.C., and for 1,000 years afterwards producing nothing literary whatever, not a line in "Old Hebrew," which anybody has found anywhere. And the only literary work which they ever produced after 1,000 years succeeding their supposed exodus is the Old Testament in square Hebrew—part of which is actually in Aramaic. Now I suggest as respectfully as I can to Dr. Yahuda that, if he is right in his conjectures about the Hebrew language, it is simply incredible that the literary labours of 1,000 years should be confined to a literature which can be collected into a comparatively small volume. Supposing I put forward another conjecture.

As the Israelites must have spoken some language, it was probably the dialect of the particular country in which they found themselves. That this dialect was in all probability based in their earliest days, on the language we know as Babylonian cuneiform. That if they did go into Egypt (which is extremely doubtful) they used much the same dialect, and if they invaded Canaan under Joshua (which again is extremely doubtful) they found there much the same dialect again. That gradually this gave way to Aramaic or some kind of Aramaic which the inhabitants of Canaan certainly spoke and understood about the year 600 B.C. If any history or legend was handed down or put into writing it was probably done in the Babylonian Cuneiform on tablets. When it was decided after Ezra's time to put the various narratives into permanent form, an alphabet was invented which we call the square Hebrew and a literary language evolved which was sacred and meant to be mysterious, based on all the languages known to the inventors. Thus the Joseph story, full of Egyptian words and ideas, had to be translated into the "Hebrew," and words obviously Egyptian in form and sound were simply transcribed into the new language. I admit this is conjecture, but it is far more probable than to imagine a people having a language "enriched" and tremendously enriched by the languages of the people it came into contact with, becoming a superbly "literary" instrument and then producing nothing whatever in the way of literature but the Old Testament for over 1,000 years. This story is simply in-

credible, especially as not a line anywhere has been discovered of the Old Hebrew in narrative. The inscription on the Moabite Stone is neither in the Hebrew language nor alphabet, and there is the gravest doubt about the Siloam inscription being older than the Maccabees. And in both these cases, anyway, there is nothing to prove the truth of the Biblical narratives except what no one disputes, the existence of certain Kings or the construction of certain things.

There is not a line in the whole of the articles by Dr. Yahuda which gives the slightest clue to the composition of the square Hebrew character Massoretic text of the Old Testament. He may give us a deal of information in his forthcoming book, but there is nothing in his articles. All he does is to assume the authenticity of the Massoretic text, show that the language therein is indebted to Egypt for many of its words, analyse the narratives of the Joseph and Exodus period, and showing he possesses a thorough knowledge of Egyptian customs and ideas, coolly assumes the stories must be true! It would be just as if anyone reading *Robinson Crusoe* proved that its author must have been to Juan Fernandez because he has so minutely described its characteristics; or that the *Journal of the Plague Year*, also written by Defoe, and one of the most marvellous documents ever written by a man who was not a contemporary, must have been written by an eye-witness of the events described; or that Dickens must have actually seen the Gordon riots in *Barnaby Rudge*, or the death of Foulon in the *Tale of Two Cities*, to recount them so vividly.

There is not the slightest reason to doubt the rise of a Semitic minister in Egypt, but this does not prove that the story of the Israelites in Egypt is accurately described in *Genesis*. Moreover, it cannot be too strongly emphasized that ordinary events, however wonderful they are, mean nothing to the upholders of Bible truth. It is the miraculous they are after, and the *Genesis* story is so full of miracles and the miraculous that if you put these on one side there would be precious little left and certainly nothing left upon which the orthodox Jew claims his people as God's Chosen Race. Now Dr. Yahuda has not attempted in the least to give countenance to the miraculous in the story. All he is concerned with is to prove that the Israelites were in Egypt at the time the Bible says they were, and that the narrative describing their history must have been written by an eye-witness and someone who thought in Egyptian idiom, and based his ideas on Egyptian custom. Has he done so? I claim that all we can infer from *Genesis* is that the writer of the Joseph story was an artist who used Egyptian material. We know the story only in Hebrew, and in the Hebrew Massoretic text as far as Dr. Yahuda is concerned. But it must be evident that in the form in which we have it, somebody transcribed it certainly not earlier than about 300 B.C. What was it transcribed from? Whatever it was, dealing with Egypt, the writer must have taken great pains to get his local colour right, especially if he was an artist, as is evident. There is no doubt that the story is a variant of a story of which the well known Egyptian *Two Brothers* is another variant, and Dr. Yahuda is forced to admit this contains "many similarities to our story." If so his whole case goes by the board. Why and how the story of Joseph became attached to Israel is simply not known—any more than why the book of *Job* has found its way into the canon of the Old Testament. But while the local colour may be and probably is correct what are we to say of the miraculous? These parts of the story which Dr. Yahuda brushes aside as if of no consequence, and which are far more necessary to

the orthodox than the truth of the practice of shaving or the ladies with mirrors, upon which kind of details the defender of Bible truth so strongly relies, are related with precisely the same vividness as are the purely possible events. And the worthy Dr. Yahuda leaves them severely alone.

As is well known a good many of the people who are so grateful that the truth of the Bible is once again confirmed, have really read neither the Bible nor any of the thousands of apologetic works. They no doubt believe that Dr. Yahuda's thesis is quite new. It will come as a surprise then that far from this being the case, the correctness of Egyptian detail in the Joseph and Exodus story has been vehemently affirmed by hundreds of orthodox writers on the truth of the Old Testament. In fact I don't know of one which omits this wonderful evidence.

In Turton's well known *Truth of Christianity* will be found, for example, a synopsis so to speak, of Dr. Yahuda's arguments. He calls it "the Egypticity of the Pentateuch," and says:—

By this is meant that part of the Pentateuch in which reference is made to Egyptian matters, appears to be written with correct detail throughout. This would, of course, be only natural in a contemporary writer living in Egypt, but would be most unlikely for a late writer in Canaan . . . There is not, however, a single word here (or anywhere else) that is incorrect for Egypt or such as to show that the writer himself was unaware of its customs . . . Dreams are peculiarly Egyptian . . . Many-cared wheat is known to have been produced in Egypt . . . There were officials corresponding to the Chief Butler and the Chief Baker . . . The better class of Egyptian always shaved. The Israelites always wore beards . . . Joseph is given Pharaoh's signet ring

and so on.

Turton gives a long list of things Egyptian, and all Dr. Yahuda does is to reaffirm what has been known for ages with regard to Joseph, Moses and Egypt. Yet it would be safe to say that most of the people who heard him lecture, and certainly nearly all those who have read his *Daily Telegraph* articles imagined he was belabouring the Higher Critics with something quite new in the way of argument. The Higher Critics knew his arguments as well as he did, but they also knew, which he evidently does not, but will have to learn if he is teachable, that the replies are far clearer and more definite and convincing.

I shall try and sum up the arguments in the next and final article.

H. CUTNER.

(To be concluded.)

THE KINGDOM OF MANKIND.

The dignity of this end (of endowment of man's life with new commodities) appeareth by the estimation that antiquity made of such as guided thereunto. For where as founders of States, lawgivers, extirpators of tyrants, fathers of the people, were honoured but with the titles of Worthies or Demigods, inventors were ever consecrated amongst the Gods themselves. And if the ordinary ambitions of men lead them to seek the amplification of their power in their countries, and a better ambition than that hath moved them to seek the amplification of their own country amongst other nations, better again and more worthy must that aspiring be which seeketh the amplification of the power and kingdom of mankind over the world; the rather because the other two prosecutions are ever culpable of much perturbation and injustice; but this is a work truly divine, which cometh without a noise or observation.—*Bacon*.

Acid Drops.

As an example of the degree of self-sacrifice to which Christianity enables a man to go, we may cite the example of the Dean of Canterbury, Mr. Hewlett Johnson. Addressing a Missionary Meeting, he said that if children were starving and no food were available he would give one of his hands to be boiled for food for them. Imagination staggers at such a rare instance of courage exhibited in conditions—where it will never be required. But we suggest that it would be more appropriate if the Dean gave his head for the making of sponge cakes.

Leader-writers of popular newspapers have to say something each day on the topic of the moment. *Something* has to be said. And if the comment should prove unusually fatuous which fifty per cent of it usually is—the leader-writer knows that most of his readers are prepared to believe what they are asked to believe. Thus, they would be quite prepared to assimilate the following piece of "editorial" wisdom:—

That Christianity has failed to reconcile men may not be the fault of Christianity. Yet this failure has been used as a reproach against its professors. It is true that Christianity has failed to reconcile men; moreover, nineteen-centuries of practical experience of it reveals that it has caused men to hate and persecute one another. Not only that, but religious feeling has added bitterness to controversies unconnected with religion. But, we are told, the failure "may not be the fault of Christianity," the implication being that it is the fault of man. He would prefer to lay the blame on God. He must have known the kind of mentality he had created in his human children. Yet he chose to present them with a creed that inevitably would arouse among them disputation and ill-feeling as regards its meaning, and its interpretation in practice. The wisdom of God would appear to be rather over-rated.

A well-known journalist has been declaring that there is in process a general move back to Victorian ideas of morality, etc. He probably means a move in the direction of the repressive conventions of the Victorian age. On the other hand, there appears to be evidence that a move is still being made away from those conventions, especially the more unhealthy ones. For an eminent doctor, Sir Arbuthnot Lane, has observed a steady change in the attitude of the general public, during the past few years, towards the health-value of light and air. He adds that, "Health movements of one kind or another have captured the imagination, and appealed to the common sense of the average man and woman. People have, indeed, combined to defeat the forces of convention and officialdom when these forces have interfered with their plans." We may as well add that the aforesaid "forces" are those which embody Victorian religious notions of "modesty," "morality," and "right and proper conduct."

A phenomenon of Welsh pulpit oratory, known as the "hwyl"—a kind of verbal ecstasy—has apparently gone out of use, or, perhaps, even the regular chapel-goer in these days is not quite so responsive or susceptible to its influence. Anyhow the Rev. W. J. Tame, Superintendent of the Claremont Mission has recently been visiting Wales, and, being not as tame in his taste for sermons as his name might suggest, he deplores the "unutterable dulness" of Welsh preachers. They "spoke as coldly as a depression over Iceland." It is all very sad; but we can think of pulpit themes which would be all the better for this refrigerating treatment. We do not share Mr. Tame's regret that Welsh ministers no longer (as he pleasantly puts it) "work themselves up into the state" they used to.

Archdeacon Storr has written a new book on an old question: *Do Dead Men Live Again?* The worthy archdeacon is not only sure that the answer to this question is in the affirmative, he is also confident that the

evidence produced for this belief at "séances used for definitely religious purposes and conducted in an atmosphere of prayer" are in a different category from those marked by vulgarity and triviality. Hence he protests against those who affirm that spiritism is all of the Devil and must on no account be investigated. The last "investigation," which took place before a judge and jury of the High Court, gave good grounds for believing that the "atmosphere of prayer" and of "vulgarity and triviality," so far from being in contrast are generally in combination. It is only such impartial investigation that reveals the nature and the aims of their alliance—viz., pecuniary interest and the exploitation of weakness and credulity.

Tiring and purile as are the constant inspired references in newspapers to various proposals for re-union among the churches it may be worth pointing out what is the real significance of the latest batch. Prompt on Methodist reunion, comes a "push" by the Nonconformist and Low Church Press as to why the Bishops, and the Lambeth Conference, do not "get a move on" as to inter-communion between Anglicans and Dissenters. Time has been found to fix up an appearance of union with Old Catholics and the Orthodox Church—both of which are non-Protestant. But that fellow-Protestants of different denominations should follow suit would, of course, bring out all the "Anglo-Catholic" Anglicans in protest. The Bishops, albeit they do not all have that appearance, are human beings, and it is easier to be friendly with a fellow in Holland or Greece than with a nest of hornets in your own garden. What is Christian unity compared to episcopal ease?

It is a good many years since a cartoon by John Leech appeared in *Punch* depicting a stout lad seated on a stile to whom is seen approaching the squire on a fiery, spirited and prancing steed. Says the squire, "Now, now, boy—don't touch your cap to me—don't!" The stolid lad without moving a muscle merely answers: "Ah warn't a goin' tew."

The poah, deah Vicahs and the squires of to-day need be under no illusions as to the leaven of Freethought which is working in the minds of working class people even in the remote rural areas. An agricultural labourer was heard to observe the other day: "If they passuns doan't shut their tater traps a bit tougher an' stop shootin' out their necks too much, they be hev comin' to 'em what them priests in Rooshyer got."

Which indicates that Hodge's interests are not now limited to the parish pump or even to the parish. Still it is pointed out that in the Southern rural areas of England there are 700,000 farm labourers who have not been reached by Socialist propaganda and who are excluded from the National Health and Unemployment Insurance Schemes.

Sanitation and Housing are two matters that lag far behind in the "agricultural districts." Some cottages sweetly embowered in roses and honeysuckle resemble whitened sepulchres for the internal arrangements are unfit for human beings and are highly inimical to health.

Population is so unequally distributed that Trade Unionism makes but slow headway in the rural areas. In the large industrial centres workers are better able to organize themselves. People will tell you that the types Mr. Wells presents in his work *The Food of the Gods* as Lady of the Manor and Parish Priest have disappeared from the country districts. Have they? Don't let social reformers delude themselves! The Church has still well impressed upon the mentality of the toilers on the soil the words: "As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be." "*Semper Eadem*" is still "the banner of its pride" even unto this day.

The Free Churches and the bright young fellows of the Oxford group, hope as they say for "a great spiritual revival" They have sure "spilled a bibful"; but our past experience of Christians when war was looming upon the world makes us very chary of placing any confidence in their sincerity or efficiency as peacemakers and prosperity bringers. The "spirit" they are not likely to revive is a dubious and suspicious influence. The members of the black army can bang the war drums hard enough and hound on their fellow countrymen with the frenzied fallacies of a bastard patriotism—the root of sentiment that Dr. Johnson called "the last refuge of a scoundrel."

It is on record (in Morley's *Recollections*) that Sir William Harcourt once said to the author of that work, "there are two institutions that will never be mended or ended, the House of Lords and the Pope of Rome." In the strict sense of the words the Parliament Act (1911) has slightly clipped the claws of a characteristically cynical dictum of one who was given to coining them. There is no sign that the other is not as sound a judgment as may be. Harcourt himself, had he lived to see some semblance of the "temporal power" restored by a compact between His Holiness and an ex-Atheist, would undoubtedly have been adequate to the occasion. Immovable as that institution seems to be, there is no reason why sane men should deplore a change in the tone of that opposition to it which has often been described as a part of the Englishman's nature. The "No-Popery" agitators of to-day hardly cause a ripple on the quiet stream of religious indifference. Few responsible men remain who, like Froude (to quote Morley again) are "too ready to snatch truth by the hair of her head, and to think the quarrel between Protestant and Catholic the only thing in the universe that matters." It is a controversy which interests Freethinkers only because it affords a curious and illuminating illustration of how much "ado" there may be "about nothing." It is the common creed of both contestants that is our concern, not the differences by which they contrive to show so touching and fervent a disposition towards the continuance of brotherly love among them.

The neo-Protestants, who still describe the reputed successor of St. Peter as a lady who followed an ancient calling in Babylon, are almost the only non-Catholics who, like him, stand without compromise or reservation for what have always been regarded as the fundamentals of Christian belief. Modernism is to them, as to him, anathema. They are, as he is, the enemies of humanistic ideas. What they call "worldly knowledge" he calls "intellectual pride"; nor is there much difference between one who says it is a mortal sin for a Catholic to miss mass of a Sunday, and those who say it is a national sin to allow *anyone* to refrain from "keeping" the Lord's Day. The Catholic who dies in mortal sin, which may be only the sin of wilfully missing mass, has nothing but "the wrath of God" to look for. The nation that breaks the "Sabbath," according to the Lord's Day Observance Society, may expect the same visitation. The Church of Rome, with its untold wealth, is the protagonist of sacred property and of the priority of the world that is to come over that which now is. The Evangelicals of the Establishment, who will have no "worldliness" that they can avoid, are the firmest supports of the Royal prerogative in religion, and of the privileges and emoluments that come from the State Connection. On "sacrilege" Mr. Kensit and the Pope would be in complete if not complacent agreement.

Mr. Hugh Redwood, a Congregationalist preacher, grateful for the back patting of the B.B.C. in the matter of religion, suggests that the Albert Hall could be filled with religious converts brought about by the messages from the B.B.C. It would be a simple matter to fill Hyde Park with the number of "listeners-in" who shut off, or switch on to something better, when the joyful nasal news comes floating through the air from a speaker ad-

ressing the world as though it was composed of school children.

At a flocking of birds of the same feather, Mr. St. John Irvine, the dramatist and novelist addressed the meeting of the Actors Church Union at Exeter. Mr. Irvine seemed to rail at the stupidity of the public for preferring the cinema to the theatre. He deplored, like thousands of others in thousands of past years that the public was going to the dogs, and that the decline of intellect in this country was enormous. It would be interesting to know at what point the Church had ever given real evidence of any interest in an education calculated to make any generation, wise, curious, analytical, responsible, or in any way fit for anything but ruthless exploitation by the grand masters of religion. This side of the case was overlooked by the speaker. The actors in the black army could be trusted not to prompt him.

We confess that in the story of the Old Crusades our sympathies were invariably with the Saracens; and nothing pleased us more than when the doughty Infidels delivered a smashing defeat on the Christian soldiers. We note that the United Methodists are being recognized as "Crusaders," and people are sending them money in their fight against "the enemies of the Cross." We venture to predict that these modern Crusaders, like their ancestors, are coming in for a pretty rough time at the hands of the enemy. The idea that a united front on the part of the Methodists is going to save the superstition and credulity which characterize both the Bible and Bible believers, is one at which modern infidels can afford to smile. They know that the Bible, as God's Own Word, is dead.

We are also told that the United Methodists are "business-like," and are to preach "a religion with no frills." That Jesus was the greatest business man the world has ever seen is, of course, no new thing. American business men long ago took him to their hearts as one of themselves. But what is a "religion with no frills?" What is a "frill" in this connexion? One answer is that the teaching of Methodism "is as simple and strong as the Sermon on the Mount." You can like it or not—it (Methodism) "promises little and achieves much." It certainly has succeeded in uniting itself at last, but if it imagines it can "capture the people who are outside the churches," it is coming in for a very rude awakening. There is as much chance of capturing the average educated man who is outside the churches, as there is of capturing the average Roman Catholic Cardinal. How many genuine scholars has Methodism ever produced?

Fifty Years Ago.

In defending ourselves we are defending the freedom of every heretic in England. If bigotry succeeds in punishing us it will continue its evil work. Its appetite will be whetted instead of appeased; for all history shows us that it grows by what it feeds on. Every form of heresy will be attacked in turn, until at last the law is rigidly enforced, and all opposition to Christianity, and all dissent from it, is ruthlessly stamped out. Let not the amiable Secularists who purchase toleration at present by flattery of the foe, and nurse the vain fancy that contradictions can long live amicably together, imagine themselves perfectly safe. Their turn may come. The extreme form of heresy bears the first brunt of persecution, but when that is disposed of the next form becomes extreme, and so on till the most moderate form is reached; unless, indeed, it is treated with the indifference of contempt, and allowed to live on because it has no power of spreading itself, and is obviously harmless to the faith of man, woman, or child.

The "Freethinker," October 8, 1882.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. MARSH.—Paper being sent for six weeks, many thanks.
G. P. LAWS.—Many thanks for letter, and your high opinion of the paper.

SCRUTATOR.—We are not surprised at the impudence of Christians in any direction where their religion is concerned. It is an interesting specimen of the type of mind that was once very common in the churches.

A. RADLEY.—We believe the Roman Church has been purchasing very much land in this country of late years. This was one of the things that led to much trouble in earlier centuries. The *Yorkshire Post* evidently follows the example of many other papers in suppressing letters criticising religion.

R. BUNTON.—If the reference is to speakers of the National Secular Society, we are in complete ignorance of those who have left the Secular platform for Spiritualism. Perhaps the information comes from the spirit world, and information from that quarter is notoriously untrustworthy.

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

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

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

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

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

Sugar Plums.

To-day (October 9) Mr. Cohen will lecture in the Woolwich Town Hall, at 7.0, on "Things Christians Ought to Know." The meeting is well advertised, and we understand a large audience is expected, with some opposition. The nearest point from which to reach the hall is Beresford Square, which is only a few minutes walk from the hall. A number of 'busses and trams pass the hall or run very near to it. The numbers of some of the 'busses are 54 and 75, of the trams 36, 38, 46 and 72.

The Liverpool Branch made a good start with a lecture from Mr. Cohen in the Picton Hall on Sunday last. The hall was full before the time announced for the commencement of the lecture, and a large number were turned back. This was in a way regrettable, but the walls of the hall are not made of india rubber. There were visitors present from Chester, Birkenhead, Port Sunlight and other districts. Mr. Shortt occupied the chair, and made a strong appeal for local support. We hope this will be forthcoming. The Branch is doing a very good work, and could do more if means were available. There are many friends in Liverpool and neighbourhood who could help, and we strongly urge them to do so. The Secretary is Mr. S. R. Ready, 29 Sycamore Road, Bootle.

Mr. R. B. Kerr, whose little work *Is Britain Overpopulated?* had such great success, has certainly excelled himself in *Our Prophets* (to be obtained from the author, 335 Sydenham Road, Croydon, rs. net). The "prophets" are, Norman Angel, Dean Inge, Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells, Bertrand Russell and Anthony M. Ludovici, and the fluent pen of the editor of the *New*

Generation has never been exercised with greater keenness, logic and incisiveness. Mr. Kerr writes from the standpoint of a convinced birth-controller, and he crosses swords where necessary with the six world-famous writers, not merely without a trace of hesitation but with most exhilarating gusto.

Agreeing in many ways with Norman Angell's *The Great Illusion*, Mr. Kerr points to what Japan may do: "To the Jap, Chinaman or Indian to-day there are still immense areas in the tropics empty and waiting to be possessed by people who are suited to the climate. It is futile to tell these people that war can no longer accomplish anything." The interests of Dean Inge, he points out, "are remarkably divided between this world and the next," but decides that "those of his writings which deal with this world are the more valuable"—a conclusion with which many of the Dean's readers will agree. Mr. Kerr pays full justice to George Bernard Shaw as a writer and dramatist, but actually criticizes his communism. Of Wells he says, "his supreme achievement has been to combine his genius as a novelist with his power as a sociological thinker, a feat never accomplished in the same degree by any other writer."

Mr. Kerr thinks Bertrand Russell's most valuable book is *Marriage and Morals*, and he gives a lucid resumé of some of its views on the sex question, and his own disagreement with some of its conclusions. The final essay on Mr. Ludovici, the "enemy of democracy, socialism, and feminism"—"the professional champion of lost causes," as Mr. J. M. Robertson describes him—concludes the little volume. It is impossible, in a short review to do justice to the vigour and lucidity of Mr. Kerr's writing and to quote fairly one would have to quote the book. *Our Prophets* should have as great a success as *Is Britain Overpopulated?*

On Sunday next (October 16) Mr. Cohen will lecture twice in the Chorlton Town Hall, Manchester. The chair will be taken at 3.0 and 6.30. We hope that local Freethinkers will do their best to bring along a Christian friend. We would rather see Freethinkers unable to gain admission than Christians. The latter most need the lectures.

The *Two Worlds* in its issue for September 30, that "The Secular Society has approached Mr. Ernest Oaten with a view to arranging another debate on Spiritualism." We can assure Mr. Oaten and everybody else that no such offer has been made by the National Secular Society. Or if it has been made in its name it is quite unauthorized, and we should like to know the origin of the report.

Mr. A. D. McLaren will deliver the third lecture of the course of four arranged by the West Ham Branch N.S.S. in the Public Assistance Station, West Ham Lane, Stratford, London, E., to-day (Sunday) at 7.30 p.m. The subject "Freethought and the Modern Man," not only looks interesting, but, in the hands of Mr. McLaren is sure to be so.

A new Branch of the N.S.S. has been started at Preston, and Mr. Clayton delivered the first lecture given under its auspices. We are glad to learn that the meeting was quite a success, and the members were heartened by the result. Preston is a centre of Catholicism, probably one of the strongest in England, and there is plenty of scope there. And we trust that local friends will see that the Branch gets the support it ought to have.

Mr. A. B. Moss is as indefatigable in his advocacy of Freethought to-day as he was over fifty years ago. We noted a lengthy letter from him in a recent issue of the *South London Press* on "The Impracticable Bible." The letter was a drastic criticism of the teachings of Jesus, and in a widely circulated paper should do a deal of good.

The Sunderland Branch has also been compelled to take a larger meeting place for the present season than it had last year. It held its first meeting last Sunday,

with satisfying results. The place was "packed out." We hope the success will continue.

With reference to the recent discussion concerning Mr. Mann's statement concerning the Roman Catholic Cathedral in Liverpool, Mr. Wearing writes that Mr. Mann has confused the Liverpool Cathedral (Church of England) with the Roman Catholic Cathedral. The former is partly completed. A start has not yet been made with the actual building of the Roman Catholic one.

Mr. G. Whitehead brought his season's tour to a close with a series of meetings in West Ham, all of which were well supported. Mr. Whitehead reports that general interest in the message of Freethought has been well maintained throughout the whole season, and that bigotry has again been the chief form of opposition. Knowing the weakness of their case, the better type of Christians, and the artful ones remain silent, the others become self-appointed fools on behalf of the Lord.

Mr. B. A. Le Maine sends us a copy of a letter sent to the *Daily Herald* protesting against the space devoted to all kinds of religious gossip, to the exclusion of other matters and opposite points of view. The letter was not, of course, published, and we do not know why Mr. Le Maine should have expected otherwise. The *Daily Herald* differs in no respect from other newspapers. It is out for a large circulation, and so far as it is political, for vote catching. And in neither direction ought we to expect fairness of view or impartiality of treatment. To please the largest number to whom the appeal is made, and the easiest way to do this is to flatter every prejudice and to play to every passion, is the rule in such cases.

The Broad-Branching Sylvan Oak.

THAT majestic forest tree, the oak, has long been celebrated as a sacred growth. At the dawn of the historical period in Europe vast oak forests still covered the central continent, and England herself from south to north was a densely wooded land. The Golden Bough—the mistletoe—appears in earlier centuries to have flourished as a parasite on ancient oaks, and its green leaves and golden white berries played a solemn part in the ritual of prehistoric Druidical religion.

Perhaps the mistletoe grew on a few outstanding trees that were consequently revered as possessing special sanctity. For, curiously enough, the mistletoe very rarely grows on modern oaks, and the plant now cultivated for Christmas decorations is usually parasitic on the apple and hawthorn, although it may sometimes be seen on the poplar, the acacia, and the lime. Still, there may be truth in the theory that a mistletoe-bearing oak which still survives on the Continent, though now rare in Britain, may in pre-Christian times have been native to our Isles, and that its sacred character in Pagan rites may have procured its destruction at the hands of fiery and fanatical apostles of the Christian cult.

Even in the days of Homer the oak was famous for its strength and endurance. In our native flora the acorn-bearing monarch of the forest stands pre-eminent in utility, longevity, and majesty. Several ancient oaks in various parts of England may date back to Saxon centuries. When the tree trunks become hollow the growth becomes exceedingly slow, and the age of these antique trees becomes a matter of vague conjecture. It is said that: "The celebrated Newland oak in Gloucestershire known for centuries as 'the great oak' was $47\frac{1}{2}$ feet in girth at five feet from the ground."

A thousand years is the usually allotted span of life for an oak. But long after the tree has ceased to function as a healthy organism it persists through a long period of senile decay. It is estimated, for instance, that the Salcey Oak in Northamptonshire, an ancient relic once described as "one of the most picturesque Sylvan ruins that can be met with anywhere," is at least fifteen hundred years old. Other remains of a long vanished past survive in English parks and woodlands, and strange indeed are the tales and traditions which cling to these venerable trees.

The oak (*Quercus*) is a genus of trees displaying pronounced sexual inflorescence. The male blossoms appear as delicate catkins while the female flower may be solitary or clustered. The seed or fruit is, of course, the well-known acorn. Some 300 species of oaks are scattered throughout the temperate regions of the Northern Hemisphere.

In Northern America the species is more abundant than in Europe, and although it penetrates to Asia and North Africa, it is unknown in the tropical areas of this latter continent. It is absent from Australia, and is unknown in South America save in the environs of the Andes. The oak is still the predominant tree in most of the forests of France, South Russia and Germany, while in England, the relics of our primeval forests that survive are dominated by this species.

The so-termed English oak is by no means restricted to the British Isles. Indeed, it is the most abundant of the species and possesses an extensive range throughout temperate Europe and enters Central Asia along the Caucasus range. Two so-called races of oak as native to Britain. These are merely varieties, however, for they flourish side by side, and the widest structural variations in leaf form and other characters are connected by every intermediate gradation.

Human attention was early attracted to the strength and durability, hardness and elasticity of oak. Our Saxon forefathers utilized oaken timber for many purposes. Their houses and their ships were built of oak, and some early churches were made of the same material. One of these timber edifices survived at Greenstead in Essex until quite recently. This Church is supposed to have been built in the tenth century and was constructed of oak trunks rudely squared. A leading authority assures us that: "The few timber mansions still standing in England are generally built entirely of oak, which in many cases remains sound after the lapse of several hundred years, sometimes outlasting the brick and stone with which the structures have been repaired."

A vast array of insect enemies assails the oak. At times, in spring and early summer, the tree may be seen in Epping Forest, Richmond Park and elsewhere completely stripped of its leaves. On these occasions the oak is one mass of caterpillars. Again, the young wood is seriously injured by the larvæ of the small stag beetle. Various other species of *Coleoptera* prey upon the plant. The larvæ of the wood leopard moth, goat moth, and other *Lepidoptera* are occasional enemies. The leaves are destroyed by a legion of larvæ. Apparently fifty per cent of the vegetable feeding insects of England are apt to infest the oak. Indeed, in many seasons it is difficult to discover an uninjured leaf. Again, the tender shoots are selected by various species of *Cynipidæ* and their congeners as receptacles for their broods. These are responsible for the gall-like growths which disfigure the greater number of our oaks.

The ivy may be seen slowly, but most tenaciously clinging to the trunk and branches of the oak. The ivy is usually considered a parasite on timber trees, but even if not, strictly speaking, a parasite, the ivy

injures and destroys its victims by its exclusion of light and air. That ivy adds to the picturesqueness of ruins, and confers beauty on modern buildings seems obvious. And certainly the ivy-mantled oak displays a melancholy beauty that never fades. For, when the oak spreads its bare branches in the winter sunshine, the bole and boughs remain emerald with the evergreen ivy that encircles them.

From far antiquity oaks and terebinths have been the objects of religious veneration in Palestine. The Hebrew prophets unceasingly fulminated against the tree worship so universal among the people. Men of renown were interred beneath the oaks. Then, as now, the tree spirits were propitiated with offerings of food and clothing. And in the days of old, human and animal sacrifices were constantly made to the divine beings who dwelt within the trees. The earlier modes of worship have now become more humane. Religious prostitution no longer prevails within the shadow of the high places and holy groves. Nevertheless, as Sir James Frazer reminds us, "the worship of the high places and green trees, which pious Hebrew kings forbade and prophets thundered against thousands of years ago, persists apparently in the same places to this day. So little is an ignorant peasantry affected by the passing of empires, by the moral and spiritual revolutions which change the face of the civilized world."

That tree worship was an important feature in primitive Hebrew religion is evidenced by the close association of Jahveh with its rites. Sacred oaks and terebinths are constantly mentioned in the Old Testament in connexion with the leading events of Hebrew history. At Hebron popular worship of sacred oaks and wells persisted in full force right down to the Christian era.

The genesis of the Hebrew race is traditionally associated with Abraham when he tarried within the sacred groves of oaks and terebinths at Mamre, near Hebron. In historical times a great fair was held in the vicinity, and this and the summer celebration attracted Semitic traders from far and near. Frazer notes that this fair was destined to play "a melancholy part in the history of the Jews; for, at this fair, after the last siege and destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans under Hadrian, a vast multitude of captive men, women, and children were sold into slavery. So the Jewish nation came to an end at the very spot where it was traditionally said to have been founded by Abraham at the sacred oak or terebinth at Mamre." And the tree is alleged to be standing till this day.

T. F. PALMER.

Democritus and Modern Science.

THERE is a tendency in some quarters to exaggerate the changed conceptions which modern science brings, and the reason is not far to seek. Science has strong historical connexion with Materialism, and opponents of the latter are quick to seize on anything which seems to challenge the older theories. In doing this they naively imagine that any change must necessarily be anti-Materialistic, and therefore in the direction of a return to the religious interpretation. They seldom pause to consider the details of these changes. When they do so they usually realize that the conflict between Christianity and Science still continues.¹ The possibility never seems to occur to them that the

general character of the newer theories is that they embrace, not abolish, the old. Science does not stand still, and a condition of its progress is that it takes us *further into* the deterministic account. To forsake that is to forsake science, and espouse ignorance: as Einstein says, science stands or falls by determinism.

Insufficient credit is therefore given to some pre-Christian thinkers, and it is remarkable to note how modern science has borne out the central conceptions of Democritus, the Father of Greek Materialism.

In confining ourselves here to his view that "nothing comes from nothing, and nothing is ever annihilated," we have in mind one or two contemporary anti-Materialists who have been too ready to claim that the annihilation of substance is the doctrine of twentieth century science. Among them may be mentioned Mr. W. C. D. Dampier-Whetham, who, in his *History of Science* (1929), affirms that "matter is vanishing," and Mr. C. E. M. Joad, who has held a similar view.²

It is possible that such claims have originated in misleading statements of scientists. Jeans, for example, speaks of positive and negative charges of electricity "annihilating" each other (*Universe Around Us*). By using the word "annihilate" they are taken to imply a loss of substance, which has been withdrawn, as it was created, by God.

That there is no loss of substance has the support of such as Professors Millikan, Harkins, Huxley, Thomson, and Jeans himself. The latter, after saying that these charges annihilate each other, goes on to tell us that *the loose energy goes as radiation*. In view of this we might question the advisability of using the word "annihilate." Obviously, "neutralize" is the word implied. We have to be ultra-careful when there is a possibility of theological minds mistaking annihilation of *form* for annihilation of *substance*.

What we have is simply a case of tangible mass passing into intangible radiation. This does mean the annihilation of the one and the creation of the other. It implies that that which was matter is now radiant energy.

Thus we must abandon Conservation of matter—as matter, and Conservation of Energy—as energy. "Bottled up" we call it matter; unbottled, radiation. The sun, for instance, loses 250 million tons per minute in weight. These atoms, says Jeans, "have disappeared, having been annihilated, and their mass is represented by the mass of radiation emitted by the sun." The weight of sunshine over a given period will thus be determined by the rate of atomic disintegration in the sun. What is loosened in stellar radioactivity is accounted for elsewhere in the production of energy:—

Thus the three major conservation laws [*i.e.*, matter, mass, energy] reduce to one simple fundamental entity, which may take many forms, matter and radiation in particular, and is conserved throughout all changes; the sum total of this entity forms the whole activity of the universe which does not change its total quantity, but it continually changes its quality." "For ever solid matter melts into insubstantial radiation." (Jeans—*Mysterious Universe*.)

Hence we may conceive a new law of conservation—the Conservation of Substance, which gives the Materialist and the monist all they require.

If disintegration occurs "the process is that of unbottling imprisoned wave energy, and setting it free to travel through space." (*Ibid.*)

Is the reverse process possible? If matter disintegrates into radiant energy, cannot the latter collect into matter? Jeans does not think so, and here another argument is shot at the Materialist. Jeans

¹ Cf. Dean Inge: "Those churchmen who airily declare that there is no longer any conflict between Christianity and Science are either very thoughtless or are wilfully shutting their eyes. There is a very serious conflict." (Science, Religion and Reality—a Symposium.)

² Cf. his debate with Mr. Cohen, 1928.

raises the question of a universe "running down," and the anti-Materialists immediately pounce on this, and declare once again that Materialism is impossible, since a clock which runs down was once wound up, and hence God begins to appear as the Great Winder-up of the universe.

As a matter of fact there are theories claiming that the universe is capable of automatically "winding itself up." But the Materialist has nothing to lose by assuming with Jeans that it will inevitably run down. What does this demonstrate? Annihilation? Disproof of Democritus? Failure of Materialism? Decidedly not. It merely conceives the possibility of a universal state of equilibrium, wherein everything is so perfectly balanced that nothing happens. There is no loss of substance; nothing has been miraculously withdrawn by an omnipotent deity; the universe has simply reached a persistent state of inactivity. Everything is there, but none of the parts changes its relationship with another.

Jeans, however, was challenged at the meeting of the British Association in 1931 by Prof. R. A. Millikan (U.S.A.), and, to judge from reports, the American seems to have had the better of the argument. He claimed the ability to demonstrate on a small scale how atom-building may keep pace with radioactive disintegration.³

He has the support of Prof. Sir J. A. Thomson: "There is no reason to suppose that the universe as a whole is running down." (*Outline of Science*.) New nebulae may be forming.

Two opposite processes seem to be indicated:—

(a) Atoms which are unbalanced (either from internal or external forces) emit radiation and lose weight. To make a pun of it, although they give out light they become lighter.

(b) In storing up energy atoms absorb light. (N.B.—Some of the rays in radioactivity, travelling at less than 600 m.p.s. adhere to atoms, and become heavier.)

Remember, then, Democritus, who said annihilation of substance was inconceivable. And remember, too, Spencer, who has a relevant chapter in his *First Principles*.⁴

The essence of Democritus' position was the assertion of a primary substance, of which all phenomena are formed, and back to which they go. There was no room for the gods, no gaps for them to fill. And that is what sound science is saying now.

G. H. TAYLOR.

³ Millikan bases his theory on the discovery of cosmic rays continually flooding through space; rays which are more penetrating than X-rays or radium rays. These rays may effect a process outside the Milky way, where matter is being built up by radiation. New atoms replace the old. This remained conjectural until taken up by a colleague, Harkins, helped by Rutherford's hint that sometimes a gas-atom, when furiously bombarded with particles of electricity, will lose or exchange some of its own particles, and thus change its element. By using powerful electric bombardments Harkins found that an atom of nitrogen, following collision with one of helium at 11,000 miles per second, may change into a heavier element such as Oxygen. Here, then is a case of integration, not disintegration.

⁴ Entitled "Evolution and Dissolution," which consist of an integration of matter and a dissipation of motion on the one hand; and a disintegration of matter and absorption of motion on the other.

No one who has ever performed any great thing looks big upon it; those who have anything to boast of are generally silent on that head.—*W. Hazlitt*.

Error is a hardy plant; it flourishes in every soil.

Tupper.

Christianity's Creditors.

It does not look as if the filing of the Petition for the bankruptcy of Christianity can now be very long deferred, and when the claims of her different creditors come to be lodged they will make up an appalling list. Christianity has for so long been subsisting on the means of others, and failing to pay interest to her bondholders that there is going to be an all-fired crash when investigations are finally completed. One feels some considerable compassion for the Registrar and Official Receiver. The examination of the Pope, the English Primate, the Scotch Moderators, and the Leaders of the English, American and Colonial Churches will take a long time, and no doubt necessitate numerous adjournments. But the Committee of Creditors composed of Humanists is determined to have things sifted to the bottom. The leading clerics will find the witness box a very different thing from the pulpit. What has been done in secret must soon be declared from the housetops. The bottom will be knocked out of the claim that Christianity is founded on unselfishness and altruism. It will be shown that Christianity has been the bulwark of vested interests all over the so-called civilized world. And it will be shown that it has derived its sustenance from borrowing or stealing the doctrines and ethics of philosophies that existed thousands of years before its time. The day of reckoning draweth nigh.

For years a minority of thinkers have been convinced by irrefragable evidence of the cowardice, meanness and selfishness of the Christian creed. Herbert Spencer defined intelligence as an amalgam of reason and feeling. Christianity has no such balance. It is all feeling and no reason. Inevitably, therefore feeling without the association of reason must degenerate into sentimentality and a stupid emotionalism. Thus we have personal conditions of morbid introspection and unnatural ecstasy and subjective disorders induced by high spiritual exaltation followed by correspondingly deep spiritual depression and melancholia. What is really alarming the Churches to-day is that the cry of aspiring Humanity has ceased to be: What must we do to be saved? And has become: What must we do to be freed? It is only the illumination of knowledge and wisdom that can dissipate the darkness of ignorance and fear, chase away the bogeys of our dreams and so pave the way to freedom. The clerical plan puts dogma before truth. The cleric says: If facts do not fit in with my creed so much the worse for the facts. It is a *reductio ad absurdum*.

It has ever been a favourite expedient of Christian leaders to proclaim that greatness and nobility of personal character is only to be explained by the power of the faith. This is, of course, a libel upon many distinguished men and women who have persistently, completely and in detail disclaimed any part or lot in the Faith. It is also a libel upon those who are frankly and actively hostile to all ecclesiastical corporations, implying as it does that they are debased, corrupt, sensual, self-seeking and anti-social. A libel to be a libel must be essentially false, and that is what this expedient is, as is daily being discovered by an increasing number of earnest enquirers after the Truth—without qualification.

Take these lines from a religious monthly periodical as indicative of a characteristically Christian method:—

Judge not! The working of his brain
And of his heart thou can'st not see
What looks to thy dim eyes a stain
In God's pure light may only be
A scar brought from some well-won field
Where thou would'st only faint and yield.

This is a representative example of Christian subtlety and sentimentality combined. Observe the tribute that is paid to the hero who has won an honourable scar which some Christian mistakes for a dishonourable stain. But the hero, of course, must be a son of God, who will discomfit other judges about the quality of the scar. According to the clerics, there can be no heroes apart from those of the Household of Faith! So line up in the queue and kiss the cross if you hope to wear a Heavenly Crown! Great, is it not? Especially the pre-supposition of the necessity for (in Christian philosophy) the perpetuation of conditions in which scars are received and inflicted!

The same sentiment is to be found pervading an article by the Rev. Dr. James Black, of Edinburgh, in the *British Weekly* of September 1. The argument used is to the effect that all nobility of thought and teaching, all that has ever been done for the emancipation, uplift and benefit of human beings by their fellow men, must have a supernatural source—nay, more—that that source is the God whom the Athenians could not identify, and about whom they were "enlightened" by the Apostle Paul. It is actually claimed that Supernaturalistic Divinity may co-operate with Naturalistic Humanity! Was there ever a more glaring contradiction in terms?

Christianity having so far wormed its way in as to become the established or Government religion of several countries has secured an intimate place in the customs, current language and work and recreation of the populations of these countries; and that position is only now menaced when members of all classes are beginning to raise doubts and put questions. Secular writers are still to be met with (though not so frequently as in the Victorian Era) who introduce the still polarised words and phrases, which when read, suggest some supernatural significance.

Humanism has a big bill to render to Christianity. The last weighty item in it (comprising resultant details and extras still being incurred) was the Great War of 1914-1918. The scene is changed. It is Christians who are now confronted with the challenging accusation: "You have stoned the emancipators and prophets!"

IGNOTUS.

"Powder and Shot."

POPE PIUS who asserts he is the representative of God on earth, and who is certainly the head of a large international organization, has seen fit to denounce what he calls "the exaggerated nationalism," which seems to have gripped the nations of the world. It is quite obvious that there is a tendency on the part of all nations to try and wrest from others in the economic sphere, the few markets which remain open so long as the present unequal distribution of the world's purchasing power exists; and that there is, in the political sphere, another tendency for nations to encroach upon each other's annexed territorial and treaty preserves. We could not, even if we wished, be unaware of the miseries and hardships which beset large masses of the people, and which are consequent upon the above tendencies which the Pope condemns, for they obtrude themselves too openly. But, if any condemnation of the attitude of the world's governments in permitting the continuation of the present distressful situation is to be voiced at all, it should be on the grounds that such suffering is unnecessary, since it is within the power of mankind to remove it. It remains, however, for the Catholic press to find reasons for condemnation which it considers are of greater moment:—

How then comes it that his Holiness Pope Pius XI. puts Nationalism on a level with Atheism and Communism? The reason is simple. It is because in its godless and evil form this Nationalism puts God behind and not

before country. It is embodied in the Pagan cry, so common during the war and so universal to-day, "My country, right or wrong!" (*Catholic Herald*, September 17, 1932.)

These are strange words indeed to which the "universal" church now gives tongue when viewed in the light of the "Pagan cry so common in the war," for which they themselves were responsible. That the Roman Catholics of England, France and Germany were guilty of exaggerated nationalism during the war there is no doubt. They were encouraged to be so, regularly and vehemently by their "spiritual fathers" throughout that holocaust, as the following examples show:—

Oh God, Thou knowest the justice of our cause, Thou knowest that it is only under the force of necessity that our people take up the sword. This is a war for the holiest, the highest that a people can possess, for the very existence of our Fatherland . . . Almighty God, for the sake of Jesus Christ Thy Son, spread Thy almighty hand over Germany and Austria . . . Holy Michael, patron saint of the German people, be thou the leader of our armies . . . Let all Catholics in Germany and Austria find strength and courage at this time in Holy Mass. (*Daily Prayers During Wartime*, by the priest Joseph Weeber.)

France stands for right, freedom and justice; Germany on the other hand, for paganism and brutal violence. God will not allow the great cause for which we fight to be defeated by those who represent brutal violence and paganism. (From a sermon by the Archbishop of Paris, Cardinal Amette, on January 20, 1916, at Notre Dame.)

Heaven uses its own coin when it has debts to pay . . . the sacred and venerable face of honesty of purpose has been saved by England and the Allies from mutilation by poisonous and scratchy fingers. There is yet great work before us. Kitchener's Empire Day is a long way off. He—the country—wants more men. We must cripple and crush the desperate country whence spring barbarism and all the things of godlessness for the sake of future humanity. (*The Universe*, March 23, 1915.)

Assuming, however, that the zealous nationalists in the priesthood have repented of their wartime folly, they have now the opportunity to become zealous internationalists at the bidding of the Pope. Even so, he will be disappointed to learn that the international flock is not following so unanimously as he would wish, for at Eggar in Bohemia, M. Mager, a prominent Catholic, declared in a speech at a men's festival in July that:—

It is just through religion that our nationality should derive inspiration and strength, so that it does not perish in the storms which assail us at the present time. For this reason we voice loudly, as German Catholics, our demand that our nation shall at least be given German priests . . . Already we are faced with foreigners acting in the name of the State as police, as postmasters and postmen, as tax assessors and tax collectors, as stationmasters and porters; we are treated as a conquered land and as a conquered people; our administration is in the hands of other nations. Our every word and song is spied upon, but we will at least make sure that our souls also are not treated as conquered territory. We will not be comforted at the altar, in the pulpit, in the confessional, on the sick bed and at the grave by a foreigner who understands our language badly and our souls not at all. (*Der Atheist*, Prag, September 1, 1932.)

When Mr. Chesterton was asked by Dr. Sheen (who has been called "the American Chesterton") to write an introduction for his book *God and Intelligence*. G.K.C. protested; "I know nothing about philosophy." "But," said Dr. Sheen, "you have written very excellent philosophy yourself—your 'Orthodoxy' for instance." "I know," replied G.K.C., "but that is popular, but yours is scientific." Then after a pause he added: "Yes, I will write the introduction. After all, we both belong to that great Mystical Body, the Catholic Church, in which we can stand responsible for one another's opinions. You know what I must believe and I know what you must believe!" (*Universe*, July 22, 1932.)

The naïvete of these Roman Catholic "intellectuals" in matters of philosophy is no advertisement for Catholicism, except perhaps that it is an honest advertisement of the absurdity of its dogmas. The profundity they display in these matters can be equally well expressed by children as the following conversation shows:—

"Our cat has got kittens. It is of great interest to the children. Four-year-old Mary and six-year-old Richard have talked to one another at length about it.

R. : Where has the tiny pussy come from?

M. : From mother pussy of course.

R. : But where did mother pussy come from?

M. : From her mother, silly.

R. : Yes, but what about the mother of the mother?

M. : Well she came from her mother.

R. : But where did the first mother cat come from?

M. : ? ? ?

R. : The dear Lord must have made her.

M. : There is no such thing as a dear Lord.

R. : Mm. What a pity.

After a lengthy pause: But there must have been a dear Lord; otherwise where else could the very first mother cat have come from?"

* * *

A device which has often been used by the Churches to bring masses of the people within its suffocating embrace is again in evidence. The people are hungry, their first need is bread. What then could be more fitting than that they should receive what should be theirs by natural rights at the hands of Christian charity? Everywhere we see the Catholic Church pretending to be on the side of the poor in order to excite their gratitude, and incidentally to draw forth in the future their allegiance and cash. From Rome the Pope announces there is no unemployment in the Vatican City where he has caused works to be started employing 5,000 workmen. From France we learn that sixty new churches are to be built of concrete in a devastated area to relieve unemployment. Now it is announced that a world-wide campaign of Catholic action is to be launched which is designed to have a "great influence on questions which are agitating and disturbing the minds of people in the world generally." Furthermore we know that everything that is likely to imperil the Roman Catholic Hierarchy is anathema to the Pope, and is described by him as a "red" menace. It is in order to prevent the growing element of revolt from being exploited by the "reds" in America that Father Cox has put himself at the head of the Jobless Party, as its candidate for the Presidency of the United States. In doing so, he is carrying out the wishes of the Pope, who wants to combat Socialism, on a programme which has socialistic elements in it. According to *The World To-morrow* (September 14, 1932) he urges "federal control" of banks and public utilities . . . tariff reciprocity and cancellation of war debts, "provided, however, that no future loans be made to foreign governments." He wants conscription of wealth, etc.

Father Cox hopes to poll 17,000,000 votes at the Presidential Election. Those whom he is leading must have a care or else they will find all too quickly and too late that Father Cox has been engaged in misleading them. Was it not a priest, Father Gapon, who on the morning of January 22, 1905, led the marching Russian workers to their bloody death before the Winter Palace of the Czar? This event and the consequent revolt resulted in the death of a thousand men and women. The "Union of Russian Industrial Workers," which Gapon led, was the invention of Subatow, who was chief of the Moscow political police. He created the movement as a safety valve for the dissatisfaction of the workers with their conditions, and was always fully acquainted with its plans and enterprises.

In Russia, the workers, led by the priest Gapon, were mown down by the Czar's cannon. In America, 2,400 Bonus marchers were led by Father Cox to petition the Government at Washington. They were dispersed with tear-gas bombs. What guarantee have they, while they continue to pin their faith to Father Cox, that next time they will not be received with tanks and rifle fire?

G.F.G.

The genuine scholar retires from an unequal contest into silence and obscurity; the pedant swells into self-importance, and renders himself conspicuous by pompous arrogance and absurdity.—*W. Hazlitt.*

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

LONDON.

INDOOR.

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Oliver Goldsmith School, Peckham Road) : 7.0, Sunday, October 9, Fred Maddison (of the Arbitration League)—"The Eastern Attitude to Peace Questions." (Questions Invited).

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1) : 11.0, Prof. J. C. Flugel, D.Sc.—"Human Capacities in the Light of Modern Psychology."

STUDY CIRCLE (N.S.S. Office, 61 Farringdon Street, E.C.4) : Monday, October 10, at 8.0, Mr. A. D. McLaren will speak on—"Some Hints on Preparing a Speech."

THE CONWAY DISCUSSION CIRCLE (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1) : 7.0, Tuesday, October 11, Sir Norman Angell—"Where Education Fails."

THE METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (City of London Hotel, 107 York Road, Camden Road N.) : 6.30, Rennie. 7.0, Mr. F. G. Smith—"The Disarmament Question."

WEMBLEY AND DISTRICT BRANCH N.S.S. (Zealey's Cafe, 100 High Road, Wembley) : 7.30, Sunday, October 9. A discussion: "Getting on with the Conversion of Wembley and District."

WEST HAM BRANCH N.S.S. (The Public Assistance Station, West Ham Lane, Stratford, E.15) : 7.30, Sunday, October 9, Mr. A. D. McLaren—"Freethought and the Modern Man."

WOOLWICH BRANCH N.S.S. (Town Hall, Upper Market Street) : Sunday, October 9, Mr. Chapman Cohen—"Things Christians ought to Know." Doors open 6.30. Commence 7.0.

OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N.S.S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand) : 3.15, Mr. E. C. Saphin.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (White Stone Pond, Hampstead) : 11.30, Sunday, October 9, Mr. B. A. Le Maine. Monday, October 10, South Hill Park, Hampstead, 8.0, Mr. L. Ebury. Thursday, October 13, Leighton Road, Kentish Town, 8.0, Mr. L. Ebury.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Brockwell Park) : 3.30, Sunday, October 9, Mrs E. Grout. Wednesday, October 12, Coek Pond, Clapham Old Town, 8.0, Mr. L. Ebury.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park) : Friday, October 7, at 7.30, Messrs. Bryant and Le Maine. Sunday, October 9, at 7.30, Messrs. Bryant and Le Maine. 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. Current *Freethinkers* can be obtained outside the Park.

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

BRADFORD BRANCH N.S.S. (Godwin Cafe, Godwin Street) : 7.30, Mr. Thomas W. Green—"What Christians Ought to Know."

CHESTER-LE-STREET BRANCH N.S.S. (New Rooms) : 7.30, Sunday, October 9, A Lecture.

EAST LANCASHIRE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION (28 Bridge Street, Burnley) : 2.30, Sunday, October 9, Mr. Jack Pickford—"O.I.C."

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY (City Hall, Albion Street, No. 2 Room) : 6.30, F. Hale—"Chas. Bradlaugh and Some of his Critics." Questions and Discussion. Silver Collection.

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N.S.S. (Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate) : 6.30, Sunday, October 9, 'The Rt. Hon. John M. Robertson—"Contaminated Ideals."

LIVERPOOL (Merseyside) BRANCH N.S.S. (Transport Hall, Islington, entrance in Christian Street) : Sunday, October 9, Mr. G. H. Taylor—"Some Implications of Recent Science." Doors open 6.30. Commence 7.0. *Freethinkers* on sale.

SEAHAM HARBOUR (Co-op. Hall) : 7.30, Sunday, October 9, Mr. J. T. Brighton—"What we are Fighting For and Against."

SUNDERLAND BRANCH N.S.S. (Co-operative Buildings, Green Street) : 7.30, Sunday, October 9, Mr. R. Atkinson—"Had the Universe a Beginning? An Astronomical Study."

OUTDOOR.

ASHINGTON (near Grand) : 6.0, Saturday, October 8, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

DARLINGTON (Market Steps) : 7.0, Friday, October 14, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

NORTH SHIELDS (Harbour View) : 7.0, Wednesday, October 12, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

WATERFOOT (The Arcade) : 7.30, Friday, October 7, Mr. J. Clayton.

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