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

Views and Opinions.

How Spirits Come.

SPIRITUALISM has of late been having a series of-to use an Americanism—"bad breaks." To name only some recent instances. There was a Mrs. Duncan who had built up quite a reputation as a materializing medium. Hers was a quite up-to-date materialization, with clouds of "ectoplasm," out of which the spiritual body was manufactured. She was taken in hand by Mr. Price and shown to be the cheapest of frauds whose only "spiritual" qualification was the capacity for secreting in an oesophageal pouch a quantity of very fine muslin and regurgitating it to make it do duty for the spiritual body that presently appeared. To clinch the matter a servant girl was found who gave a sworn affidavit that she had purchased the muslin for her mistress, Mrs. Duncan. She also supplied other data which left no doubt in the mind of anyone who was not a die-hard believer of the nature of the manifestation. Mrs. Duncan promptly left the scene of her latest exploits, although it is extremely possible that she will turn up again somewhere to provide fresh evidence of the nature of life in the "summerland." Then there was the case of Mr. Bradley, who having made a fortune in business, concluded that this gave undoubted evidence he was a man whom no one could deceive. In two books he boomed a medium, Valiantine, as a genuine "trumpet medium," a man who was simply too dull to outwit so acute a man as Mr. Bradley. Then came a third book describing how he had found out Valiantine to be a common trickster, that the wonderful voices were fakes, and the ghostly thumb-prints were taken from one of Valiantine's fingers, or from his elbow, or from his big toe.

The next "bad break" of recent date for Spiritualism was the case of the spirit photographer Myers. Over and over again these people who photograph spirits have been exposed. But this does not prevent others coming along, and the crop of people with "the

will to be fooled" is always large enough to attract operators. The results are always profitable enough—from the point of view of gain or the gratification of a sheer love of notoriety. If it is a brief life these photographers of the invisible live, it is good enough while it lasts. Myers was completely exposed if any man ever was, but one would be rash to say that it will kill the belief of the hardened Spiritualist in the actuality of spirit photography. If A. is caught out working a swindle, well, the swindles that he worked successfully remain as "unimpeachable evidence." And if every trick of A. is exposed, then there is B. who was never bowled out, and every unexposed operation becomes a scientifically demonstrated truth. "The will to be deceived" is something on which the swindler in all directions may count with a considerable degree of confidence.

* * *

Ghostly Finger Prints.

But the cruellest blow of all has just been dealt by an exposure of some of the methods of the famous American medium "Margery," the wife of Dr. Crandon. The progress of materializing spirits has always been suspiciously like the progress of professional conjurers. First the tricks are simple, table rapping, mysterious sounds, etc. Then with practice comes proficiency and an elaboration of more complex performances. Margery's trump card was the introduction of the thumb print of her dead brother. There is a possibility of the thumb prints of two persons being exactly alike, but the odds against are something like two million to one. Now Margery had a dead brother, Walter, and it was the spirit of Walter that obligingly suggested something that Spiritualists all over the world welcomed as an absolutely decisive proof of spirit intercourse. Why not get a finger-print of the dead Walter? So, very conveniently, a razor that had been used by Walter several years before, and which had remained "providentially" untouched by other hands, was discovered in an old chest. At the same time a finger-print of the ghostly Walter was impressed on wax at a seance. Finger-prints of those present were taken in order to prove that it was not a print of Margery's finger, or of her husband or of anyone present. Here was a really decisive test. The "proof" was hawked all over the world, and Spiritualists defied any sceptic to rebut this evidence.

But, alas for the spirit of poor Walter! There has just been issued from the National Laboratory of Psychical Research (Bulletin No. III, price 2s.), an account of the origin of these thumb-prints, by which it is shown that the thumb-prints belonged to a mere mortal long before they were the property of Walter's ghost. For some time search has been made among those who have at any time sat with Margery and Dr. Crandon in the hunt for ghosts. Among these was a man who prefers to be known publicly as Mr. K. His thumb-prints were signed by their author, and "a

careful examination" showed that "not only was the right thumb-print identical in pattern with the seance-room prints of the Walter right thumb, but the left thumb-print was also identified as that attributed to Walter." The prints were submitted to experienced experts, "who promptly agreed that the identification had been established." The Bulletin continues:—

The enlarged photographs were also shown to the man whose ridge patterns had been duplicated in wax. It is doubtful if anyone could have been more surprised. Quite naturally, he was somewhat perturbed on learning that replicas of his right thumb-print had been well distributed all over the world as the print of a ghost's thumb. . . . In response to a question he stated that *he had made his prints for Margery*, and in reply to a further question as to what had been done with them, suggested that the writer should ask Margery what she had done with the prints.

Margery, while admitting that such prints had been made, asserted that she had never had them.

Plates illustrating the prints of Mr. K. and "Walter" are published which enable the reader to form his own judgment. The plain conclusion is that the thumb-prints which the Crandons have for years been publishing as the finger-prints of a ghost are those of a living man. Sensible persons never doubted this to be the case, however impossible it was to show how the trick had been worked. The experts to whom the prints were shown "were kept ignorant of the issue involved in this identification," but it is agreed that taking the correspondences between Mr. K's and Walter's prints "there is not one chance in billions of billions that the two prints did not belong to the same person." We hardly think that "Walter" will produce any more of his thumb-prints.

* * *

The Pull of the Primitive.

But this will not, of course, prevent the production of the finger-prints of other ghosts. Credulity grows by what it feeds on, and the grossest impostures flourish once a particular atmosphere has been created. Since "Margery" made her scoop, and before this discovery of the original of the prints was made public, other spirits, not to be behind hand, have produced their finger-prints. The game has been carried so far that an announcement was made that Margery had actually arranged to have the finger-prints of an unborn baby produced so that these might be checked when the baby was born. I have not heard much of this lately, but if it were done I feel quite sure that it would receive plenty of credence. We ought not to forget that the miracles of the Roman Catholic Church, surely amongst the most ridiculous in the history of mankind, were once accepted by all believers, and are now believed by the majority of Roman Catholics. Nothing is too absurd for belief where the will-to-be-deceived is well developed.

All that one can hope is that these exposures may make those who are not already up to the neck in the bog of superstition a little more on their guard than they otherwise might be. But the average Spiritualist is to-day pretty hopeless. "Our spirit friends" will invent new tricks as the old ones are worn out. Here again the story runs parallel with the history of conjuring. A trick is worked until some one gives the secret away, and the conjuror is driven to invent new tricks to satisfy his market. The only difference between the two is that, in the case of conjuring, our inability to see how the trick is worked merely makes us admire the cleverness of the performer. We do not take our inability to say how the thing is done as evidence of spirit activity. But I am quite sure that if a conjuror told an audience of children or savages that the rabbit came out of the hat because spirits

had placed the rabbit there and created it out of nothing, he would be able to form a strong band of admiring believers in his "psychic" powers.

* * *

The Will, to be Deceived.

Two reasons may be given for my belief that an exposure of Margery or any other medium will not affect the ordinary Spiritualist very much. The first is the general inability to understand what is going on before the eyes of the onlooker. It is pitifully amusing to hear the Spiritualist talk of the way in which he or she has "investigated" spiritualism. The investigation is worth just about as much as would be my investigation of the tricks of a highly skilled conjuror, or a quite ignorant person's investigation of abnormal mental states. It never appears to enter the heads of these people that any previous knowledge is required to make an investigation worth the recording. Let anyone try the experiment of getting from nine spiritualists out of ten what they know about dissociation, or how much experience they have had with the various automatisms which explain to the qualified investigator much that is put down to "spirits." He will find they are simply ignorant that the things which are put down to action of spirits, when the "phenomena" are not the result of fraud, are well known occurrences that can be explained without the slightest reference to the ghosts of the seance room. In every other subject the value of an investigator lies in his knowledge of the things he is investigating. With spiritualism no ignorance, either the ignorance of the uneducated, or the ignorance of the scientist when dealing with things outside his sphere, is sufficient to damn his evidence. He is convinced, and his conviction is accepted as conclusive evidence.

The second reason is that of the enormous superstition, latent and active, that exists in our midst. Every daily or weekly rag out to exploit ignorance as a way to increased circulation counts upon this. The half belief in signs and omens, the fascination of ghost stories, tales of wonderful coincidences and "providential" happenings, the belief in lucky days and the widespread "well-you-know-there-may-be-something-in-it" spirit, all create the atmosphere in which such a primitive thing as Spiritualism flourishes. A man is not of necessity free from superstition because he has given up the belief that a Saint walked a hundred paces with his head under his arm. Superstition is killed only when the unexpected and the incalculable are recognized as no more than the unexpected and the incalculable. The thinking of the mass of the people is at the mercy of their immediate environment, and that is as true of those who graduate from Eton or Harrow as it is of those who come from the Council school in the slums. To kill superstition we must kill the conditions on which it lives.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

Creditor.

We pay for living and loving;
After our laughter comes a sigh;
None can escape Death's removing.

It is in vain that we ask why
We pay for living and loving:
We have lived, so we have to die.

Bootless it is Death reproving:
Though we may think his price is high,
We pay for living and loving.

BAYARD SIMMONS.

Further Outlook Unsettled.

"Mankind divides itself into two classes, benefactors and malefactors."—*Emerson.*

"There is nothing on earth divine beside humanity."
Landor.

THE alluring invitation, "Come to Church," seen on so many hoardings and in so many windows of houses, and the perfervid appeals of evangelists requesting citizens to flee from "the wrath to come," is a reminder that religion is now purely a business, and is worked on strictly commercial lines. Missions and meetings are advertised nowadays in the same way as liver pills, safety razors, and cinema attractions. Preachers and revivalists adopt similar advertising methods to circus proprietors and theatre managers, presumably with the same satisfactory financial results. The Young Men's Christian Association and the Church and Salvation Armies are as industrious advertisers as the big departmental stores. The purely business character of religion, however, is seen clearest in the methods adopted in order to raise revenue for religion, which is alleged to be without money and without price, and whose adherents are told constantly to rely on prayer, rather than on worldly methods of "raising the wind."

The extent to which ordinary commercial means have displaced voluntary contributions so long in vogue in connexion with congregations is highly significant. The old-fashioned method of collecting coppers and threepenny bits during a service is no longer considered adequate. Even the amateur sale of work, and jumble-sale, is being superseded by more up-to-date substitutes. So much is this the case that trading by religious bodies is considered by business men as a menace to the welfare of the trading community. Editors of trade papers protest against the growing habit, and devote editorials to the unexpected competition as an additional hardship in troublous times. Bazaars, conducted on a strictly business basis are held for the reduction of church debts and the erection of costly places of worship. Missionary and other propagandist societies owe a good deal of their incomes to sales of goods, and many thousands of pounds are raised annually in this manner for religious interests. At a bazaar held at Lincoln over £1,000 was realized, and a week's missionary exhibition at a seaside town brought £200 clear profit. A sale of work in South London produced £250, and a dozen similar functions in the London suburbs realized over £2,000.

These are quoted as examples, but consider for a moment the many similar exhibitions and sales held annually throughout the country for the very numerous religious organizations, Bible and missionary societies. Add to these the 13,000 parish churches, and 10,000 chapels, mission halls, and tin tabernacles, all of which now look to bazaars, exhibitions, and sales, as an easy and legitimate way of raising money, and we begin to realize the extent of the practice.

The whole thing is calculated to make the most hardened sceptic smile. For all the religious bodies ignore the appeal to prayer, or else give it but the merest lip-service, and turn to a purely secular method of salvation from their financial worries. Where is all this to end? The logical outcome is seen in the widespread trading organization of the Salvation Army, which sells regularly among its members tea, clothing, children's toys, musical instruments, and all manner of requisites, and uses the profits for its propaganda. The Salvation Army touts for emigrants at the usual charges, and accepts commission from shipping and railway companies with heroic fortitude. Insurance business is also encouraged, thus justifying the pleas-

ant reminder that Salvationists hope to be insured against fire in this world and the next.

This inclusion of Mammon as the fourth person of the Christian Trinity has had another unexpected result, which would have shocked the pious folks of the Ages of Faith. It has led, by degrees, to the desire to make religion a pleasant, as well as a profitable, pastime. To attract audiences, all the unpleasant features of religion have been most carefully camouflaged. We sometimes wonder how the work of the various Churches was conducted before the introduction of the sugar on the pill of piety. Faith, we must suppose, was stronger in those days of old, not needing the artificial impetus of secular amusement. Our believing ancestors went to a place of worship, and gave money freely, and their families went with them. It was a painful duty, but it had to be done to avoid a great deal of heat and unpleasantness after death.

Nowadays, people give less money to the churches, but the deficit is made up by bazaars, and social attractions, so that the priests do not suffer in the long run. So far as the so-called Church of England is concerned, the priests do not, like Nebuchadnezzar, eat grass. The principal bishops receive, between them, £200,000 yearly, ranging from the £10,000 of the Bishop of London to a modest couple of thousand. The average rector or vicar, has a comfortable income, and a nice house, mostly larger than his neighbours. Even the curates are no worse off than young doctors, and they work less than half the hours of the doctors. Soul-saving is an easy and comfortable profession, made more secure by the pleasing fact that Christian congregations are the most gullible of all people. They will give money to prevent St. Paul's Cathedral slipping into Ludgate Hill, whilst Dean Inge composes his sermons in a nice house in the shadow of the same cathedral. They pay money in order that they may walk the golden streets of the New Jerusalem—after death! The process ought to have appealed to Barnum, the prince of showmen, who had notices "To the egress" placed at one end of his exhibition. People who went that way found themselves in the street, and had to pay again to return.

That the younger generation does not give money to the priest so freely as the older generation is a sign of the times in which we live. If the young people of to-day believed the priests' abracadabra it would pay for it just as their forefathers did. Some day, priests will find, like Othello, their occupation gone, for the most practical of all reasons. And old England will be all the better for the clearance, for these reverend nuisances poke their noses into everything with the noisy insistence of carpet sweepers. "I've a right to my 'arf of the road, aven't I," shouted a lorry driver. "Yes!" replied the bus driver, "but don't take it out of the middle." Priests always want the middle of the road, the best of everything. And some believers are nearly as bad as their pastors and masters. A neighbour of mine "found Jesus" and bought a trombone the same week. A number of otherwise estimable people are now quite confident that prayer is only priestly hocus-pocus, for the trombone-player is still very much alive and well.

MIMNERMUS.

Freedom, with all its threatenings, is the only guarantee of stability, not only because it is a safety-valve, but because the life of communities is one long process of adapting experience to thought and habit to reason.

J. Ramsay Macdonald.

Every man has his own style, like his own nose.

Carlyle.

The Problem Parent.

MR. AND MRS. A. S. NEILL, together with Bertrand and Dora Russell, are the best known of our pioneers in educational methods. Mr. Neill is headmaster of Summerhill School in Suffolk, where he puts into practice a system of education, the chief aim of which is to allow children to develop naturally in an atmosphere devoid of the repressive influences of ordinary schools. It is not, however, with Mr. Neill's school and its activities that I am here concerned, but with his latest book *The Problem Parent*. This is a sequel to his earlier work *The Problem Child*, a book based upon the author's personal experience in dealing with "difficult" pupils who were sent to Summerhill because they were considered as not being amenable to the régime of other schools.

Having concentrated so long upon the solution of child-problems, it is hardly surprising that Mr. Neill should have at first omitted to devote his attention to the factors which went to create these problems. But he has now made good the omission in *The Problem Parent*, which emphasizes the deterministic fact that a proper remedy for ill-effects cannot be found without due consideration of their causes. Unfortunately his urge to "save souls"—a relic of religious influence to which he confesses—seems to have precipitated him into a campaign of redemption before he had thoroughly investigated the conditions responsible for producing the sort of "soul" he set out to "save." He tends, therefore, to judge of these conditions in terms of the effects familiar to him, rather than to account for the effects in terms of their true causes.

One also suspects that, in his impressionable days, Mr. Neill had been violently smitten with the psycho-analytical theories which were then the rage. And his infatuation was such that he has never since been able to look at facts except through the eyes of his first love. Consequently his vision of the obvious is often distorted by those psychological abstractions and paradoxes with which Freudism is rampant. But worst of all are the inconsistencies and contradictions which mar so many of Mr. Neill's opinions, and which thus invalidate his methods. It is chiefly on this account that his book must prove a disappointment to those who have made more than a superficial study of psychology, morals and religion, as well as of the causes of the many troubles from which our civilization is suffering.

Mr. Neill claims, for example that his school demonstrates *complete* freedom in choice of work and behaviour. Yet he says: "Obviously any community must have laws," and his pupils submit to a Private Property Rule. Elsewhere he says that children should be *compelled* to respect the rights of others. When a visitor asked why he did not allow his pupils freedom in the choice of diet, Mr. Neill vouchsafed the reply: "Because I am a very inconsistent person." Which is tantamount to saying: "I do not know." The honest answer would have been: "Because I have my own ideas, and being boss, I intend to enforce them." In connexion with compelling children to respect the rights of others he says that this should not be done "by moral lectures or punishment, but by an open battle." Unless he means something else by these words, he appears to be inculcating the principle that Might is Right—which hardly squares with his remark: "Keep the child free from fear and hate, and later he will be peaceful." On the subject of discipline Mr. Neill is equally confused. He does not seem to realize that fear and hate are no more essential to discipline than courage and love are essential to conditions where discipline is absent.

But it is in the sphere of morals and religion that Mr. Neill most often betrays a lamentable lack of clear vision and co-ordinated thought. He deprecates the ignorance that prevents husbands from giving sexual pleasure to their wives. He regards it as a riddle whether the hate of the body and its consequent over-estimation of the spirit is an eternal thing innate in the human psyche. He thinks it unfortunate that our institutions are based on the hypothesis of original sin. He declares that parents are most dishonest in the domain of sex, and that this dishonesty derives from infantile prohibitions and taboos. And lastly he asks himself the question: "Why do the lower classes stick it? Why don't they rise in a body and destroy the system that gives them poverty and hard toil and inferiority?" Yet that extraordinary myopia from which he suffers blinds him to the obvious conclusion that religious teaching is at the root of all these evils.

To the last question quoted he replies: "I do not know why they do not rise." Yet on the same page he points out that it is because they have been taught to be content with the status which God has given—obviously, therefore, their resignation is a result of religious teaching. Similarly with the other points he raises. On other pages, and usually in some wholly different context, he hints at the religious basis of all the ills which he deplors and would remedy. Yet he seldom ventures to link up the effects with their obvious cause, namely, Religion—and in particular the Christian religion. On the contrary he declares that Christianity has never been given a trial (!) and says that the most burning necessity of to-day is to get rid of Christianity as it exists now in its *perverted* form. As though it ever has been or could be anything else but perverted and perversive. He claims to have had *mystical* experiences which prevent him from laying down any final law about the *unknown*. As though, apart from the meaningless jargon of religions and mysticisms, anything more can be said concerning the mystical and the unknown than that they are just plain evidence of human ignorance—Mr. Neill's included. He says that non-religious parents send him children who fear God and Hell. As though parents who teach their children anything whatever about God or Hell could legitimately be called *non-religious*. Again he avers that "his parents have no special interest in religion." Yet out of some dozen cases cited, more than half are specifically referred to as being religious or "converted"; while he informs us that the worst conflicts about masturbation occur in children from pious homes.

In spite of these facts he suffers under the delusion that "the Christian religion in its present form is just about dead," and that the Churches still regard Darwin as a danger, and that it will be many years before they wake up to the fact that the real danger is Freud. Does he really not know that the Churches have long since taken Darwin to their bosoms (apart from a few Fundamentalists), and that psycho-analysis is already in process of becoming their faithful handmaid? As for his belief that "the active Atheist is always an unconscious believer in God," nothing can account for that but his undigested Freudism. By the same argument every active religionist is an unconscious Atheist, while Mr. Neill himself must be an unconscious hater of children and his school a subtle means of wreaking hate under the guise of philanthropy!

But Mr. Neill is fond of hoisting himself with his own petard. In questioning a boy of eleven he asks: "Where is God?" and also "Where is the Devil?" The boy answers the first by pointing up, and the second by pointing down. Mr. Neill lets the first gesture pass without comment, but after the second he has no hesitation in saying: "There is no

Devil." Whereby Mr. Neill proves himself to be an unconscious believer in the Devil! Apart from this, it would be interesting to learn why, if he is so sure about the one, he is so reticent about the other. After this kind of slipshod thinking one is not surprised at his declaration: "In case my parental readers should get the impression that I am an enemy to religion, I now explain that I am a very religious person." And since he gives Bernard Shaw the credit of having said: "Prove all things, holding fast that which is good," there seems little doubt that they will believe him!

Bishop Barnes succeeds in shocking his fellow clerics by his inconsistent criticisms of some of the cruder religious superstitions. But it is just this type of heterodoxy which helps to give religion, and all the other evils and superstitions associated with it, a longer lease of life. Mr. Neill teaches no religion in his school, but he still flirts with the illusion that there is some good in religion or Christianity—or in some particular version of one or the other to which he is partial. Let us hope, however, for the sake of his own integrity and of the brave experiment he is making, that he will not too long delay the discovery that one cannot make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. We need to encourage every attempt to break away from false moralities, false enthusiasms, and false values generally, of which ninety-nine per cent are directly attributable to religious teaching of some sort. For this reason Mr. Neill's adventure deserves the approval of every Freethinker. At the same time it would be foolish not to try and check every indication of compromise with those forces which have always stood, and which still stand, for the perpetuation of credulity, ignorance, bigotry and suppression. When Mr. Neill finds time to push his enquiries into the causes of problem parents and children a little further beyond the confines of psycho-analysis, we feel sure that his eyes will be opened to the true nature of all religion, and that he will then realize the real origin of nearly all the maleficent habits of thought and action which impede his own high aims. In the meantime, and despite his somewhat equivocal views, we can genuinely wish him and his endeavours the best success.

C. S. FRASER.

James George Neate.

Address by CHAPMAN COHEN

(City of London Crematorium, Ilford, on November 3)

I HAVE to discharge to-day what is to be a very difficult duty. Long ago I promised James Neate that if I outlived him I would say a few words of farewell on this occasion. Those words will be very few because I know that words cannot express what one feels at the death of a friend, still less can they do justice to the feelings of those who stand in a still closer relation to him.

To-day I close a chapter in a friendship that has existed unbroken and unmarred for over forty years. During that time I have learned to value a man such as James Neate, as men learn to value the friendship of true and loyal men and women. During the whole of our acquaintance I never knew him to harbour a mean thought or to do a mean action. He was faithful to his word, conscientious in the discharge of obligation or duty, not quick to make friends, but what was far better, slower in losing them. He was sympathetic to anyone in trouble and I know of very many kindnesses he did to those in trouble or distress. Sometimes that readiness to give help was abused, but

he believed that it was better to occasionally help the undeserving than to let the deserving go unhelped.

Above all, he had a strong sense of justice, a love of fair-play. It may have been this that attracted him to a movement which he joined in the days of his early manhood, and to which he remained attached to the day of his death. He called himself, and delighted in calling himself a Freethinker. In the Freethought movement he spent the whole of his adult life. I have stood with him in many a rough struggle, and shared with him many a triumph. But whether in calm or storm, in triumph or in momentary set-back, he remained the same character, loyal, trustworthy, firm in his faith of the ultimate triumph of truth and justice. I believe the world owes more to this type of man than it knows. In all public movements attention centres on those who are its mouthpiece. But the greatest of leaders would be helpless were it not for the loyal help of his followers, for their placing at his disposal their mental, moral, and material resources. And it is to the credit of James Neate that he spent his life in a movement that, as the world counts values, gives nothing but misunderstanding, abuse, and even sharp punishment.

In one of her novels George Eliot makes one of her characters say when commenting on the state of the world that this might easily have been worse than it is, and that it is not so largely due to the thousands of unselfish men and women who have lived an unknown life and rest in unknown graves. Those who have never known our dead friend will reap the helpful consequences of the ideals and principles which he gave his best efforts to establish.

James Neate lived long enough to see the triumph of many of the things he advocated, and the partial triumph of many others. He asked for no other payment for his services, and if what has been achieved cannot be counted full payment for his efforts, he would, I am sure, count it as a very substantial instalment.

Those who are standing here are mourning the loss of a true friend, a brave comrade, a devoted follower of a good cause. We shall all miss his presence, but we shall have the inspiration of his life. The last time I saw him, two days before his death he was longing for rest. He knew, as we all know, that the tales we have been told of the terrors of death are mere fables, the crystallization of the fears of countless generations. The dead do not suffer. It is the living who feel the pain of separation, not the dead. It is true that the pain at separation is measured by our love for those that are gone, but nature cunningly turns that to its better uses. For as time and the work of the world heals the wound, the memory of our dead becomes to us one of our dearest possessions.

It is in this way that the dead and the living are linked together in a single stream of helpfulness and encouragement. In this world we have to face death and life as two aspects of the same fact. It is the grave that gives the cradle its value, it is the cradle that points to the significance of death. We cannot view the death of a close friend without sorrow, nor is it wise that we should do so. We would not even if we could destroy the grief which gathers round death; it is enough if we can rid it of the terrors and illusions that ignorance and fear have placed round it. But there is the world of life and work and duty round us, and we can best show that we have deserved the friendships we have had with the dead by continuing to discharge our duties to the living.

To the body of James Neate we say farewell, but our memory of him will live on. He has entered into the larger life of the race, he has joined that "im-

mortal caravan" which becomes larger with the passing of each generation. He has gained the only immortality that is possible to him, the only immortality for which good men and women ought to strive, that of loving and grateful memory in the minds of those whom they leave behind.

Southend and Salvation.

THIRTY Free Churches at Southend recently carried out a joint campaign of evangelization. Its unique feature was that it made "no appeal to Southend to come to church." This wily manœuvre seems to the *Christian World* to be "a model piece of evangelism." Observe the *modus operandi*. The local ministers, "pocketing their dignity," picketed the morning trains to the City distributing literature. (There are, we presume, no unemployed bill distributors in Southend.) Open-air preaching was "the ground work of the campaign," the local ministers were the evangelists "and for the purpose of the campaign they were all anonymous." Unless they are all unknown nonentities in the place, how could they manage this anonymity? Some of the places of amusement were used for "mass meetings," which are hardly "a modern method" in which "to approach men in the name of Christ." The "literature" featured four questions, with the general title, "Are you satisfied?" (1) "With the state of the world?" (2) "with yourself?" (3) "What do you think of the way of Christ?" (4) "Do these practical suggestions appeal to you?" (Here follows an invitation "to attend meetings and state personal difficulties.") All this means is that except for the ridiculous attempt of the ministers to be anonymous, and the omission of an explicit invitation to a place of worship, this is just Moody and Sankey, Torrey and Alexander, or Gipsy Smith over again.

"The people will not come in," says the *Christian World*, "they have lost the habit, they do not understand the language or manners of church-going folk." (The latter are certainly often difficult to understand.) Outside, however, they "listen respectfully," and, according to our contemporary, when they perceive that real live preachers think their message so precious "that they will leave their warm church firesides and offer it at the street corners" they will fall for it. The cheap jack, selling his catch-penny article at the street corner on a cold night doubtless counts upon a similar response to his shivering appeal. Who but for necessity, would be hawking his wares on "a night like this?" He also is an expert at this business of exploiting people's needs. He often convinces them that they need just what he has to sell. When they get home and examine the purchase they discover that it is not alone in having been "sold." Are "you satisfied," we are informed "is the first word for the modern evangelist"; and this will "sweep the complacent humanist aside." The streets are full "of the wistful and the dissatisfied, the weary and the frightened," so "let us speak to them in their own tongue, not in the phrases of the theologian and the ecclesiastic, but in the language of the ordinary man." The result it is predicted, will be to convince them that "we are thinking not at all of our own interests, but only of their needs."

The phrases of the theologian do not change their meaning by being spoken in the vulgar tongue; but, if that instrument is used only to reveal and not to disguise their meaning [as it is used in these columns] we imagine its use may have results that will drive its users to find some other instrument. The Southend campaign was called The "Quest." A quest may be an inquiry or a search for game. This evangelistic use of it is, perhaps, an attempt to combine these meanings. The churches ask a man "are you satisfied"; and he answers, "What's the game?" It is a very old game, never so revolting as when disguised as a remedy for all the needs of men and nations.

A.H.

The Book Shop.

RUSSIA has been described as a country that is a holy devil. This paradox is true supposing the student is prepared to accept assumptions for facts. There is not the slightest doubt that some twenty intellectual earthquakes have taken place in a part of Europe containing roughly a hundred and thirty-nine million inhabitants. When it is remembered that no novels were printed in Russia until the year 1750, that sprawling continent may be said to be a comparative child in the world of books. My own impression, after reading as diligently and carefully as time and circumstances permit, is one of suspended judgment. The attempt to reconcile the teachings of Christianity with those of Paganism has been a task attempted by the giants in literature, and many modern Russians appear to be trying to do the same thing. A book that I can recommend as an interesting specimen in this connection is, "The God who didn't Laugh," by Gleb Botkin, published by Victor Gollancz, Ltd., 14 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, W.C., price 7s. 6d. net. This book was published in 1929, and the author was born in 1900. His father was physician to the late Czar, and the son has lived through revolutionary and anti-revolutionary times in his own country. He appears to have had a most varied life, escaped execution for loyalty to the Czar, fled to Japan, and he continued to promote the cause of the White Army until its collapse. The author has learned the English Language, and how thoroughly he accomplished this may be seen in the pages of his novel with the extraordinary title. His criticisms of Christianity in Russia are not what may be termed as deadly, neither do they show that he has much contact with real philosophical criticism of a branch of the gigantic imposture amongst which he found himself. Tosha, the hero, makes an early contact in his life with the many stories about Aphrodite, and in addition, in his impressionable years he meets three beautiful women whom he cannot forget. For an inside account of monastic life in Russia, the author appears to have a most intimate knowledge in the same way that the knowledge of Catholicism possessed by Anatole France enabled the great French writer to know his subject thoroughly. This book coming from one who was connected with the peculiar and odious form of autocracy under the name of Czardom is significant. It would tempt the reader to think that the colossal humbug, symptoms of which were seen in the figure of Rasputin, was simply used as a crude form of force by a Government which has determined that the continent of Russia should remain permanently pot-bound. What explosions occurred since the Czar's departure are already known, and the author has let in much light on the inner history of the Russian Church. For those who care to trace influences, it will be easy to find that the author has read that medieval and beautiful romance of "Aucassin and Nicolette," has an affinity with Lyeskov, who wrote *Cathedral Folk*, has not forgotten his reading of *The Temptation of St. Antony*, and as novels go in these days of mass production, this novel is worth shelf room. It has memorable passages and whimsical criticism of that which holds thousands in fear. Tosha, who first started to pray according to monastic rules took considerable time to understand the atmosphere, and as a sample from bulk, we give the following extract: "There was also somewhere in the back of his mind the question as to why was it necessary to look at the tip of one's nose to enable the Almighty God to know one's heart." The following description of the odour of a monk's cell suffers nothing for being brief; one looks in vain for the world to be saved from such a source: "The air was heavy with the smell of incense, oil, horse-radish, and never-ventilated human habitation."

C-DE-B.

In one word it must always be foul to tell what is false; and it can never be safe to suppress what is true.

R. L. Stevenson.

Dead divinity is the deadest thing that ever lived.
Cotter Morrison, "Sevice of Man," ch. 4.

Acid Drops.

The *Christian World* offers the very timid, but belated suggestion that November 11 might be made a Peace Day, instead of a military display. It says there is a danger of the "Silence" becoming "a mere military pomp, filling young minds with the glory of the soldier's calling." We have been saying this for the past ten years, and while we are glad to see the *Christian World* at length following us we should have liked a little more courage shown. The churches are adepts at the art of demonstration, and we suggest that if on Armistice Day they had organized a procession of the blind and the crippled who are left to us from the war, that might have done something to have checked war-like preparations, and to have encouraged a feeling of peace. But all this side of war is kept in the background, save when it is used to get more recruits for the army, and a strengthening of those feelings and beliefs that lead to war.

The publication of the *Life of Lord Oxford and Asquith* was a literary event of last month. The publication, on the same day, in the same papers, including at least one liberal paper, of a certain full-page advertisement signed by his widow was a disgrace to all concerned. In the sordid opportunism of our politics Lord Oxford—in words applied by Lord Coleridge to Mr. Foote—never "pandered to the bad passions of mankind." We are not concerned with him as a party politician; but Lord Oxford gave a definition of liberalism, in its large sense, which the hucksters and mountebanks of Fleet Street and Westminster might read with shame, if they were capable of that emotion:—

To be open-minded; to struggle against preconceptions and hold them in due subjection; to keep the avenues of the intelligence free and unblocked; to take pains that the scales of justice shall be always even and fair; to welcome new truths when they have proved their title, despite the havoc they make of old and cherished beliefs.

Here, in every word and every line, is the antithesis of the current ingredients of party politics and popular journalism.

Giving what one can easily spare, says Canon Williams of Hensworth, has not the same value as when it is done by self-denial. Hence, he has issued a challenge to fifty men in his parish to join him in a fortnight's abstinence from tobacco, drink, sweets, entertainments and rides in trams and buses for distances under three miles. The large sum of money which he believes will thus be saved is to be presented to a local church building fund. Noting the destination of the money saved, one might classify the rector's bright wheeze as a trading stunt. In a similar way the local shopkeepers might challenge the customers of the local churches to deny themselves the pleasure of contributing to religious funds, the money saved to be devoted to a fund for improving the business facilities of the locality. It will be noted that parsons are always willing for self-denial to be practised in regard to the commodities on which other people depend for a living. As a means of solving the unemployment problem, it doesn't seem particularly helpful.

The narrower patriotism of an olden day is giving place to the patriotism of mankind, declares Lord Londonderry. The probability is that he hopes that such is the case. By the look of things, there appears to be a revival of the narrower patriotism in various parts of the world in recent years. In many directions one sees national groups being dominated by the narrower patriots in the political and journalistic spheres. It is almost needless to say that their inspiration is not derived from the Secularist philosophy. And if they should feel the need of any further encouragement or inspiration, they could hardly do better than absorb the contents of the Old Testament, with its tribal deity who sanctified all the petty aspirations of the narrowest kind of tribalism.

The Methodist Missionary Society is appealing to the brethren to make their gifts "at least not less than last year," so that the Society may start the new year unhampered by debt. While the total number of out-of-work people is round about the three million mark, it is to be hoped that the more intelligent Methodist will perceive that there is a better way of using his spare cash than by dumping it into the greedy maw of a missionary society. The urgent necessities of man are of far greater importance than what a parson alleges to be the wish of God. And as God is a specialist in self-sacrifice he will no doubt approve of necessitous man receiving what might have been given to God.

Tips are, according to the Archbishop of York, an elaborate fraud upon the public. Perhaps so; nevertheless the condemnation of them by a Christian priest sounds very odd. For an age-old custom in Christian churches is that listeners to the "glad tidings" should leave behind a tip for the (alleged) priestly services rendered. Moreover, a priest will not perform a marriage or burial service unless he receives a tip, which he grandly calls a "fee." Tips may be an elaborate fraud, in the view of the Archbishop, yet we don't anticipate that the "servants of God" will refuse to accept them for a very long time to come. Besides, there is never any difficulty in justifying by Holy Writ any kind of fraud which priests may believe necessary in the service of God—which means, to the advantage of priests.

The Bishop of London and the Methodist President have sent a joint protest to the L.C.C. against the proposal to open cinemas in London on Sunday afternoon. It was pointed out that the effect of such opening would be "disastrous to Sunday schools." We presume this is because most children are sent to Sunday school as there are no facilities available for them to enjoy wholesome occupation or recreation. In other words, a good attendance at Sunday school depends mainly on the enforcement of Sabbath prohibitions that produce bored children. Apparently the aforesaid Christian chieftains think that one of the duties of the L.C.C. is to prohibit everything that tends to relieve for children the boredom of the English Sunday. The impudence of such an assumption is typically Christian. If cinema competition is "disastrous" to Sunday schools, the child's "natural instinct" for religion must be pretty feeble, and the magnetic power of Jesus woefully weak.

To study the advertising columns of the religious press is to be reminded with sickening force of the way in which religion is used to get money for causes good, bad and indifferent. By way of illustration we take an advertisement of a reputable Orphanage, run on religious lines, but frequently using the press for purposes of appeal. This advertisement is from *The Christian*, the well known organ of evangelical views. A column of "displayed" appeal concludes:

Meanwhile we are facing the winter months, when food, warmth and clothing for our large family will be a heavy tax on our resources. We commend our present position to the warm-hearted, prayerful sympathy of all our interested friends, and we feel confident that they will respond to our urgent need for the sustenance of the Lord's work committed to our care (that He is so signally blessing at the present time), as He may enable them. Our hope is in Him, and we have long proved that "His compassions fail not."

Their "hope" is in God; but their faith is in advertisement, and their charity that of the benevolent public. They say that "God has answered prayer by preserving us from debt without having to curtail our work in any direction"; but, oddly enough, their prayers, and the "prayerful sympathy" of the readers of the advertisement, are not enough. It's their money they want.

Mr. George Lansbury is asked by the Rev. Walter Wynn to tell Christian ministers how they can deal with the unemployment problem. As a Christian his

answer will be that the Christian ministers should send up massed prayer. And if there was no effective answer, Christian ministers should be, for all time, warned off economics. We make this suggestion to Mr. Lansbury free of all charge.

A Salvation Army staff captain has been sentenced to twelve months in the second division for embezzlement and falsification of cash books. There is only the usual moral to be drawn from this that a profession of a religion does not make any difference in ordinary human affairs.

The Rev. W. H. Heap says of the *Outline for Boys and Girls* that, "the book has its merits, but the first thing that strikes one reading it is how completely religion is ignored . . . One could understand the position of an editor who took the ground that religion was so personal an experience and so controversial a subject that it had been thought well to leave the matter for the child's more mature judgment. That, however, is not the line taken in the book. Nearly every article is written from the standpoint of those who regard religion as either negligible or untrue. What these writers desire is that while the child's mind is still plastic, they should provide it with a theory of life which utterly ignores religion." Apparently it is very wicked to apply a Christian policy in another direction!

It is good to find that the Rev. Dr. Goudge cannot see any "reunion" of the Christian Churches unless they are agreed that the Church that God desires is "no other than the one Holy Catholic Apostolic Church which we find, in the New Testament." When a man talks like that we know where we are, as Mr. Arnold Lunn, would say. Either "true" Christianity is the New Testament variety—with its devils, miracles, apostles, etc., or it is not. We ourselves plump entirely for the New Testament as the official base. Take away the Virgin Birth, the Immaculate Conception, the Resurrection, the Ascension, as the Modernists do, and where, we humbly ask, are we? No, "reunion" must insist on every iota of the New Testament—and the Old as well. Heresy is an evil that should be stamped out!

Besides, Canon Newbolt is now deploring the fact that "the English are no longer a Bible-reading people." And he might have added, neither are the French nor the Germans nor the Russians nor any nation as far as we can see. But we admit it is dreadful to contemplate any people not reading the Bible. To prefer Edgar Wallace or the "pictures" to sitting down and reading the story of Joshua or the ravings of Jeremiah is a sign of horrible degeneracy especially as the dear Canon believes we ought to trust the Bible itself "to tell its own story to the heart of man." Well, don't we? What is to prevent the people from reading the Bible? Goodness knows, the efforts of Sir John Reith and the B.B.C. and Mr. James Douglas ought to bear some fruit at last. The truth is, of course, that no man with any pretence to intelligence can any longer believe, as the Canon does, "Our Lord Jesus Christ, as we know Him here and now, Risen, Ascended, Glorified." This is sheer nonsense.

Who says that the Roman Church is not encouraging education? A new secondary school for 400 girls was opened by the Cardinal Archbishop at Golders Green the other day. It cost £10,000 and is the fourth he has opened this month. Altogether the schools cost £67,000. The Cardinal Archbishop, however, let the cat out of the bag with a vengeance in his opening speech. "Children, unless a definite foundation of religion is given them during their early and most impressionable years, can scarcely be expected to grow up, as they should, in the service of God. That will be the first thing taught within the walls of this building." Precisely, and the Catholics also want the State to contribute a big share in grants for perpetuating this kind of thing. And yet we are told the fight is all but over.

Another lady in direct communion with God, has been found in Bavaria. This is proven by the fact that she bears on her hands and feet the "stigmata"—the wounds of "our Lord"—which bleed every now and then, and also because, when paralysed, she heard a voice say, "get up and walk," and she did so. She also has visions and speaks in very ancient Aramaic. Of course, Spiritualists would say that it was a spirit who was speaking, but the Bishop of Cleveland is quite sure—we believe—it was God. At all events Teresa receives Holy Communion every day, so we agree with the Bishop.

Bishop Myers of the Catholic Guild of Israel, does not seem very optimistic of roping in all Jews to the one holy religion of God. He claims after 2,000 years it is still "pioneer" work. In dealing with these obstinate people, we should always remember, he claims, "they know not what they do." What a delicious confession! The worthy Bishop knows perfectly well that most Jews do know what they do and if he knew the contempt he and his kind were held in by them, he would be less optimistic than ever. That other fatuous missionary, Father Day, thinks it's because of the Jews' "strength of will." Father McNabb blames the "so-called" Christians, but Mr. Burns said Jews listened with interest to their lectures in Hyde Park. The real reason why Jews were not converted wholesale seemed to elude the speakers. It is simply that silly as Judaism may be, it does not come within 1,000 miles of the arrant nonsense of Roman Catholicism, and most Jews know that.

Fifty Years Ago.

It may, of course, be objected that Jesus Christ never ridiculed the priests. Quite true, but he denounced them. His utter incapacity for satire rendered this his only weapon of attack. No character was ever so deficient in humour; he often wept, but we never read that he smiled. It is not surprising, therefore, that he never satirized his enemies; but what he lacked in irony he certainly atoned for in invective. Listen to this fierce diatribe:—

Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive greater damnation. Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves . . . Ye fools and blind . . . Ye blind guides . . . Ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness . . . Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?—MATTHEW xxiii. 15-33.

There's elegant invective for you! we yield the palm to Jesus in this game. But we rather think we have the advantage of him in sarcasm, and we think we have as much right to use one weapon as he had to use the other. Nay, we claim a right to use them both; and we shall not be frightened from our purpose by the fulminations of the pulpit or the terrors of the law.

We are quite aware that Pilate would not consent to the death of Jesus until the priests accused him of sedition, blasphemy being a crime unknown to the wise Romans, and any such charge being esteemed by them as only the bitter wrangle of sects. Yet the fact is plain, that the charge of sedition was preferred in the last extremity, so that the victim might not escape. Blasphemy was the original charge, and it led to the death of the Nazarene. Are we not justified, then, in speaking of Christ the blasphemer? Have we not the right to taunt the Christians with hurling at us an epithet that struck Christ on the brow, and drove the nails into his hands and feet? Let them dread the verdict of history, and tremble lest they share the execration meted out to those who murdered the founder of their faith.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

F. TERRY.—We should have liked a chat with you, but you were more usefully employed at the bookstall, and we are pleased to learn that you were busily employed. Thanks for congratulations on what you call our "stirring address."

S. W. WILLATTS (Jaggan, Australia).—Copies of the paper are being sent as requested.

S. HARTMANN.—Your argument is ingenious, but do you really think on consideration that men would never have discovered the secret of right social living without religion? In substance the argument is too childish for serious discussion.

S.H.W.—So far as we know you are the only person who has heard of the "large legacy" left to the *Freethinker*. We know nothing of it in his office.

C. HARPUR.—A man has an unquestionable right to reject Atheism, or anything else, but no man can be justified in basing his rejection of either Christianity or Atheism upon a mis-statement. And when one notes the care that many take to prove to the world that they are not Atheists, and the carelessness with which they permit themselves to be labelled religious, one suspects that their protest against Atheism is not entirely due to the desire not to be misunderstood.

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

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

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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 connexion with Secular Burial Services are required, all communications should be addressed to the Secretary, R. H. Rosetti, giving as long notice as possible.

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

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

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

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

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

Sugar Plums.

To-day (November 13) Mr. Cohen will speak in the Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate, Leicester, at 6.30. His subject will be "The Making of Mass Opinion."

The Birmingham Town Hall, one of the largest Halls in the Midlands, was well-filled on Sunday last to listen to Mr. Cohen's lecture on "The Psychology of Belief." The address was listened to with obvious interest, and the lecturer received quite an ovation at its conclusion. Our old friend Mr. Willis occupied the chair with all his old ability, and it is to be hoped that his earnest appeal for the local Branch will meet with a ready and generous response. There are enough Freethinkers in Birmingham to make the Branch one of the strongest in the country if each will do his or her share.

We are asked to announce that Mr. W. Williams, Newsagent, of Andrews Square, Stockport, keeps on hand a stock of *Freethinkers* and other Freethought

publications. Stockport Freethinkers and others will please note.

After Democracy. Addresses and Papers on the Present World Situation, by H. G. Wells (Watts, 7s. 6d.) If Mr. Wells is, as he affirms, "notoriously an extremely incompetent speaker," we are glad of it if it saved these addresses from falling only "on the air." What we may call the "text" of these talks may be found in words from one of them: "Unexampled prosperity and happiness are within the reach of our race; and it staggers on the edge of what may be irrecoverable disaster." Not only economic nationalism, but internationalism, must, Mr. Wells argues, give place to a world in which the interdependence of all nations shall be practically implemented. Only this can prevent world-wide bloodshed.

Dealing with the accomplishment of this new world Mr. Wells has some devastating criticisms of the existing order, of its effete education, of its useless theology, of its monstrous antiquated laws. In one address, *My Point of View*, there is a note of optimistic fervour in the exaltation of science. "We can all be citizens of the free state of science," but only when we have been cured of "congenital traditionalism." The book includes the much discussed address at the Liberal Summer School—here amplified—and a Memorandum on the World Situation, originally intended for private circulation. It also proves, not that it needs proving, Mr. Wells courage, for he has printed an article written in January last, in which he was asked to predict what was going to happen in 1932. Nine months to testify to his prescience; but whether we shall know "when this year is out" any better than we do now, if mankind can be pronounced "sane" or certified as "incurably demented" may, perhaps, be questioned. Much, or little, may happen in three months. We have only one criticism of this book—its price. It is not only the people who can pay 7s. 6d., who need such education and stimulation as is given by Mr. Wells when he gives of his best.

In reply to a number of enquiries we may state that a lecture by Mr. C. Cohen is being arranged for the Stratford Town Hall early in December. Full details will be announced in these columns in due course. The West Ham Branch N.S.S. will co-operate as usual in the local arrangements.

We are reminded by a reader of "Acid Drops," in our last week's issue, dealing with Father Woodlock and *Essays and Reviews*, that Temple, the Headmaster of Rugby, was appointed Bishop of Exeter (to silence him, it was said at the time) and afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury and crowner of a King. His son is now Archbishop of York. Can it be that Bishop Barnes hopes to follow in Temple's footsteps and become Primate of all England? More unlikely things have happened.

The High Wycombe Parliament decided by a majority of two dozen (27 to 3) "that religion does not retard the human race." So now we know.

At Slough U.D.C. meeting Councillor Bennett said our troubles were due to the fact that eighty per cent of people do not go to a place of worship. This country was successful when it feared God. Councillor Whiteman thought it "useless to try and tell a man about a Supreme Being when he had an empty stomach." The Council decided that all should be asked to co-operate—to welcome the Duchess of York on the opening of a new Central Hall. It was stated that Slough has 3,000 unemployed!

The Ashington and District Branch N.S.S. wishes to thank all those who generously sent books towards the formation of a Branch library. Quite a good number of books have been received, and the library is now a decided feature of interest among the members.

The Glasgow Branch N.S.S. has worked well to secure a good audience in the City Hall (North Saloon) Candle-riggs, to-day (Sunday) where Mr. R. H. Rosetti will lecture at 6.30 p.m., on "Christianity v. Science; Anthropology." It will be Mr. Rosetti's first lecture visit to Glasgow, and we hope the local saints will see that the attendance is not only good in numbers, but also contains a large proportion of intelligent Christians.

On Friday evening, November 18, Mr. R. H. Rosetti will address the Sub-Divisional Workers' Branch of the National Union of Tailors and Garment Workers on Freethinkers and Freethought. The hall is situated at 1 Buckle Street, Leaman Street, London, E.1, and member of the general public are admitted. The address will be given at 8 o'clock, and questions and discussion will follow.

The International Federation of Freethinkers has a proposal for developing correspondence between young Freethinkers of different nationalities, and it is suggested that those wishing to take advantage of the proposal should send the following particulars to the Secretary, International Federation of Freethinkers, Post Office Box 66 (Hartwig), Prague, Czechoslovakia; name of the young Freethinker, Address, Age, what School, Language in which correspondence is desired, Nature of correspondence desired. From Home country, or name Foreign country. Any scheme which aims at a close touch of friendship between the people of different countries is worthy of encouragement.

Mr. Lunn's "Flight from Reason."

It behoves the Freethinker to read the works of his responsible opponents. Mr. Lunn's *Flight from Reason* appears to be a suitable instance. I have perused it twice in a search for a promised "dangerous thrust" at Freethought. It does not contain one.

Twenty none too well arranged chapters might be sorted out as follows: five on the flight from reason, five on Materialism, five on Darwinism, three on bias, and two on the relations between the scientific expert and the amateur.

Mr. Lunn begins with a summary of Anglo-Catholic apologetics, which is very convincing if you happen to be a Catholic, but which leaves you cold if you cannot swallow the Argument from the First Cause. Mr. Lunn sets before us the following model of reasoning, taken from Aquinas:

Some things move. Therefore they are moved. But this cannot go on indefinitely, or there would be no First Mover, and thus nothing moved. And so we come to a First Mover, who "is understood by all to be God."

This argument, says Mr. Lunn, is "undoubtedly valid." Why, then, has it no modern appeal? Because, he replies, "we have lost our faith in reason."¹

Which is a fact, if reason be identified with medie-

¹ Although the book purports to condemn the flight from reason to experiment, we find later the complaint that insufficient notice is taken of empirics. In one breath he tells us our age is too engrossed in collecting facts to draw inferences, and in the next that it is apt to ignore facts (such as "miracles" and psychic phenomena) from fear of their conflicting with reason.

val metaphysic. To the modern logician the *Summum Bonum Theologica* is quite obsolete. Even if, for instance, we allowed St. Thomas' argument as far as its penultimate statement, why should it follow that the first mover is "God"? But at best the notion, "A moves B," as representative of the modern conception of causality, is crude to the point of being inaccurate.

Once we have taken our stand on false premises, as was the medieval scholastic failing,² we may arrive, as Mr. Lunn admits, at the most fantastic conclusions, logically deduced from those premises. In the Middle Ages, for example, there are cases on record of pigs being tried for the murder of children; of a cock being convicted of "the heinous and unnatural crime of laying an egg"; while on another occasion a learned counsel made his mark by a stalwart defence of the misdeeds of some vermin, his clients, we are told, blackened the case against themselves by failing to appear.

And if you are inclined to say "Rats!" Mr. Lunn will tell you where to look up the records.

Similarly, the God who lies at the end of a chain of separate entities, each moving its successor, rests on the unwarrantable premise that there is such a chain. (The modern conception of causality implies not a "chain" but a "web").

* * *

How is it that some people appear to reject God and a future life with serenity? Mr. Lunn, to his credit, is aware of the difficulty, but his attempt to explain it away is rather feeble. Huxley, Darwin, and the others, had "theophobia" (anti-God bias), resulting in their "will to disbelieve." Yes, it is all very vague, and in the end we are not surprised to find Mr. Lunn confessing (p. 69) that he cannot understand it at all. Those who think they can get on well without a God must be abnormal, and those who do not yearn for a future life must have made an awful mess of this one.

Such is the state to which the anti-Freethinker's case is now reduced.

"Why should it be regarded normal to wish to be alive fifty years hence," he asks, "and egoistic to dislike the possibility of being extinguished fifty-one years hence?" The answer is easy—because we are fitted only for the kind of life we live.

It is hard to see how Mr. Lunn can honestly condemn Weismann for his "sentimental affection for a premise."

* * *

Mr. Lunn's book contains the usual misunderstandings regarding Materialism, and we have, once again, the old confusion between Determinism and Fatalism. We have also the reiterated absurdity that science deals only with things that can be measured, and that the Materialist thinks that what cannot be measured is of no account. (It would be interesting to hear Mr. Lunn justify, on these lines, the science of anthropology).

Materialism, we are next informed, abolishes conscience. Would Mr. Lunn patiently ponder this question: how does the analysis of a phenomenon imply its abolition?

We cannot, if we are Materialists, blame the criminal, says Mr. Lunn, for he is only the product of conditions: we should blame the conditions. If Mr. Lunn will show us a criminal over and above—inde- pendent of—conditions, we can promise to pass no judgment on him. But so long as the criminal act is the registered effect of conditions (and there is no other way of regarding it), we cannot tackle those condi-

² A favourite medieval premise was, "all things have final causes."

tions without tackling the criminal. In passing judgment on the criminal we are passing judgment on the conditions which determined his behaviour.

Determinism, says Mr. Lunn, offers no criterion of truth. To the question, what is 7×9 , one boy will answer 65, another, 63. Both answers were determined; how does the determinist know which is correct? Now a good way would be to count 7 groups of 9, and check the answer a sufficient number of times. A profound and sophisticated solution, truly; yet conceivably within the reach of a Catholic apologist.

Materialism, continues Mr. Lunn, cannot account for the higher mental states. "Juliet would set up precisely the same physical movements in the brain of Romeo if they were both automata." This indicates a failure to appreciate the position of the Materialist, who, says the events in Romeo's brain cannot but involve the emotions; that it is against deterministic law that those events should not have effects. Mr. Lunn might just as well say that H_2 and O would still combine even if the result were not water.

"Thought has no influence on action," says Mr. Lunn's Materialist.³ This is quite misleading. The "thought" which is rejected by Materialism is what some philosophers have called "pure thought" (self-existent, unconditioned), and which the Materialist regards as a chimera of idealist metaphysics. Thought, for Materialism, takes its place among other phenomena as the registered effect of conditions.

And then comes our old friend, the logical refutation. If man has arisen from the ape, why value his convictions? "Would anyone trust the convictions of a monkey's mind?" asks Mr. Lunn in triumph. If he will look closer he will see, for a start, that the argument works both ways, against his own beliefs as well as the Materialists. The argument has a double failure, however, for it is itself invalid. We place no value on monkeys' beliefs; then why value those of men, who have arisen from them? Because men are not monkeys, would seem to be the simplest answer, and one again refuses to treat an absurdity as a profound argument.

For consider its puerility. B is an eminent professor of biology. His father, A, was a labourer who knew nothing about it. We should not trust A on biology; then why trust B, who has descended from A.

Like his Atheist opponent, Mr. Lunn sees no consistency in half-hearted, intermediate beliefs. Positivism, the Ethical Church, Haldane, J. S. Huxley's godless religion; they all come in for criticism. He pours scorn on Mr. Joad's "instructive thrust or urge," and on Mr. Wells' "immortal soul of the race," which, he contends, means nothing. Perhaps the same could be said of Mr. Lunn's "world of eternal values."

Mr. Lunn would very much like to believe that the Roman Church has not been averse to scientific discovery, and it was probably with great satisfaction that he came across Dr. Walsh's *The Popes and Science*. Mr. Lunn aims at defending the Church on the ground that it was indifferent, rather than hostile to, science. But then comes the all-important qualification—*providing that science did not encroach on theology*. Copernicus would have been safe, he observes, had he reserved his theory as a "mere working hypothesis," but he went further and "maintained scripture had blundered," thus "asking for trouble." In other words, he pushed his theory to its logical conclusion, and the Church did not like it.

³ G. J. Romanes appears to have made the blunder.

However, Mr. Lunn is not quite irretrievably Catholic, for he admits on p. 27 that as regards Copernicus the Holy Office (of an alleged infallible church) made "a great blunder."

* * *

And finally, Mr. Lunn seems to regard the failure of Darwinism (in its restricted sense) as the failure of naturalistic evolution. To the Materialist evolution never meant Darwinism.

Mr. Lunn is an authority on skiing. Can it be that in his pursuit of the latter he has failed to notice that post-Darwinian evolution is even *more* Materialistic? Mr. Lunn makes no mention, e.g., of the work of Prof. T. H. Morgan, and his colleagues in America. We may enlarge on this, with the editor's permission, in another article.

G. H. TAYLOR.

Criminology and Religion.

"By their fruits ye shall know them" is one of the few texts with which Freethinkers would most readily agree. For that reason, perhaps, it has grown rather unpopular of late—or, at any rate, I have not seen it blazoned forth on the hoardings in those flaring letters which inform us of the latest version (whatever it may be) of the eternal verities of religion.

But when it is used by those who still believe in things religious, it is generally understood that the fruits of religion are good deeds, whilst the wicked Atheist glories in his evil doings and wallows in his filth. Whereas, if history means anything, it is the other way around. But we need not go to history for our examples. They are present in the annals of criminology. The study of criminology has always been rather a hobby of mine, and lately I have been amusing myself by trying to find an Atheist murderer. Surely, if all that has been said about the necessary association of Atheism and evil deeds (in Russia and elsewhere) it should not be a difficult task! But, so far I have not succeeded in finding him.

The number of murderers who are, at the same time good Christians, is astounding. The number of criminals who assert, on the scaffold, their belief that they will, after their execution, go to Heaven is really touching.

But let us consider some actual cases. Charles Peace, the most notorious criminal of the nineteenth century, was, in his latter days, a most delightfully religious man, and he wrote some beautiful letters to his relatives, bidding them take example from his horrid fate, but, at the same time announcing his firm belief that God had forgiven his sins, and was preparing a place for him in Heaven.

George Joseph Smith, who made a habit of drowning his wives in the bath, was, as all readers of the late Edward Marjoribanks' excellent *Life of Marshal Hall* will remember, a repentant sinner, and was actually confirmed by a bishop after his sentence. (A murderer confirmed in the faith!) His one desire, so the Bishop of Croydon announced in a letter to Marshal Hall, his counsel, was "to make himself right with God."

Dr. Pritchard, the "father of modern poisoning," as he has been aptly called, who poisoned numerous people, was confident of a happier life ahead. As he was a drunkard, a gambler and a sexual degenerate, it is difficult to see what he expected, but still the fact remains, that he wrote, the day before his execution, a cheerful letter, beginning, "Farewell, brother, I die in twenty hours from this—Romans viii. 34."

Kate Webster, a servant who murdered her mistress in circumstances of terrible brutality, nevertheless, in

her final confession, announced that she was "full of confidence in a happy eternity."

Mahon, the murderer whose discovery, some few years back, created a considerable sensation, was one of the pillars of the church for years, as was Major Armstrong, the Welsh solicitor who killed his wife, and tried to kill a rival practitioner in law.

Dr. Crippen was of a religious cast of mind, of course, and . . . but why need we go further? Think of the Borgia family, whose very name has become a byword, and the head of whom was one and the same with His Holiness the Pope. From the time of the Borgias (ay, and before that) down to the present day, religion has produced its murderers in their thousands. War has always been waged in religion's name, and war is just murder on a larger scale.

"By their fruits ye shall know them." Well, it was not a Freethinker who said that.

JOHN ROWLAND.

"Powder and Shot."

WHAT tricks these Catholics resort to, in their efforts to hold the people to their faith. A contributor to the *Universe* (September 23, 1932), has outlined his ideas for the creation of Parish Banks in England. Briefly the scheme is that in every Catholic Parish a fund of money should be created with the loans of self-sacrificing parishioners. His readers were asked to imagine the time when every Catholic Parish had a floating fund of £100 to £300, always increasing and always in circulation among the poor. It would be hoped to manipulate and extend credit to the poor so to increase their purchasing power, create a demand for existing, unsold commodities and finally to somewhat reduce unemployment. In fact, it seems to be a pretty scheme to undercut the big banks. This is not a bad thing in itself. But it also has an advantage for the Parish priest in so far as borrowers from the fund sell their souls into his keeping at a modest rate per cent. Fortunately the English law may prove a stumbling block to the promotion of the scheme, but it is interesting to know how it is flourishing in other countries. Germany, for instance, has 40,000 Catholic banks. In Holland, they are the backbone of Catholic action. In Belgium, they have made possible the creation of a Catholic peasant democracy. The United States too, has shown great interest in the scheme. But then, it must not be forgotten, that the last of the French credits which were obtained by England in her efforts to keep on the Gold Standard came from the Clerical Bankers, the "Credit Lyonnais."

In the *Southwark Record*, a Catholic contributor outlines his proposal for providing houses to Catholic parents with large families. It can be well understood that the Catholic workman, surrounded with his practical interpretation of the Churches ban on the "murder of souls," finds it difficult to accommodate his family in flats built by local authorities, and at the same time satisfy the conditions laid down by the Ministry of Health in regard to overcrowding. "So Catholic houses for Catholics have obvious advantages."

Yes, indeed, not being subject to the sensible conditions for preserving cleanliness laid down by the Ministry, the Catholic population which would be housed by these Catholic housing schemes, would be at full liberty to go on having large families in a restricted area. As the Catholic Church in practice encourages sinning, we could expect the congestion

which would result to violate all the elementary principles of citizenship. Things are bad enough as they are, but the most tentative of secular housing schemes have as their object the relief of congestion. The Catholics, however, seem to regard their housing efforts not as schemes for relieving congestion, but as providing breeding grounds for Catholic parents to add to the Catholic congestion.

Another instance of Catholic philanthropy respecting the weaknesses of the "faithful" is to be found in the attitude of the Roman Church to betting. The Established and Free Churches, having supported an economic system which has deprived the working class of the power to purchase simple pleasures, and which leaves them only the time and inclination for the gratification of their baser instincts, condemn such an iniquitous weakness as gambling. The Catholic Church is far more open. The Rev. Father Careless of Saint Anne's Roman Catholic Church, Custom House, has opened a Tote Club. Of course, betting on the part of individuals is merely an indication of the extent of their foolishness. So long as their losses do not reflect harm on the welfare of their dependents, it is nobody's concern but their own what they do with their money. From that point of view Churches are wrong in trying to make out that gambling should be indictable as a criminal offence. The Roman Church is much more reasonable. Seeing that gambling is an attraction in which all classes of society indulge, it takes the view that allowances must be made. Better still, such weaknesses must definitely be encouraged, so that the faithful children of the Church become more and more dependent on the Church to absolve their wickedness—at a price. We are of the opinion that the Rev. Father is quite consistent with Catholic doctrine when he opens up a Tote Club. At the same time, however, it strengthens our unbelief and our contempt for a creed which professing to uplift mankind to great and noble things, deliberately farms the weaknesses of humanity for the sake of a 10 per cent rake-off.

It is no longer news to irreligious licence holders, to learn from Father Martindale, S.J., that "The B.B.C. was an extremely valuable method of establishing contact with many who would not otherwise listen to a Catholic priest, and there was no censorship of broadcast utterances from any Catholic pulpit, nor were they expected to water down their doctrines until they were indistinguishable from any others." After the three regular Sunday services, the morning and evening weekday services, the additional mid-week service and the talks series on religions, we are grateful to Sir John Reith for allowing us to hear sometimes a little something which is not tainted by his pronounced Christian flavour. Though we like to believe that the air is free, we are nevertheless indebted to the mechanics of our time for providing us with sufficiently selective instruments to tune in to the Godless countries. We are sometimes tired, though Sir John may find it difficult to believe this, of the incessant harping of the angels which we are told by our Christian enemies inhabit the very spheres which the Continental sound waves traverse.

"Ecclesiastica" (the official Catholic newspaper of Germany) has given its report on Church taxation in Chile. During the last few years the official separation of Church and State has been recognized. The State no longer subsidizes the Church, which is therefore dependent for its income upon the taxation it levies upon its members, a thing which before was quite unnecessary. Peasant farmers are allowed to

pay their taxes in kind, but the stipulations regarding the same are very instructive indeed.

On a yield of 6 to 50 sacks of produce, the Church tax is 20 kilos; 50 to 200, 40 kilos; 200 to 1,000, 80 kilos; over 1,000, 160 kilos (1 sack equals 80 kilograms.)

Apart from the fact that this fails to disclose the taxation for 50, 200 and 1,000 sacks exactly, it is very interesting to see how partial the Church is to the wealthier producers. Following no doubt the principle which has come much to the fore in England, that principle of "equality of sacrifice," the Church takes 4% per cent of a yield of 6 sacks, whilst the tax is scaled down to 1/10th per cent in the case of a yield from 1,000 to 2,000 sacks. The report concludes with the following attractive notice:—

Upon payment of the appropriate taxes or natural products, the faithful will become members of the cultural-taxation-society, and will share in the grace and indulgences of this society. The spiritual advantage of this consists in the fact that daily Holy Mass will be said for the deceased and living members. Also they will participate in the indulgences sanctioned by the Holy Father upon petition of the Bishops." (*Der Funke*, October 18, 1932.)

G.F.G.

A Rationalist at Large.*

TO-DAY the painstaking dialectician, like the despised pedestrian, suffers much from dazzle. Books are turned out like temporary hoardings run up for brief displays of scintillation. Much that is germinated by midnight oil is distributed by limelight. Let us, then, praise a serious author when we meet him. It is a pleasant change to meet a book that is not too easy to read, and assuredly was not easy to write. Wide reading, much thought, and a careful truth-seeking temper have gone to its making. Seeking a scrupulous accuracy of phrase the author has laboured with some unusual words—"antinomy," "evaluations," "organon" for example. If "an honest tale speeds best, being plainly told," we may think these pages, both in form and essential purpose, would have been advantaged by that method. This is not merely a criticism of phraseology. Like a thread, winding somewhat elusively through the pages, visible here and there, but never woven into a recognisable pattern, there is the author's attempt "to set forth a basis of faith, an attitude to the problem of Being and the purpose of Life, in harmony with advancing knowledge." Since we are asked to accept this "not simply as personal opinions, but as belonging to immanent truth and objective reality," we might have been given a chance of examining, other than by implication, the fundamentals of the author's "faith."

It is no light task that is here essayed. We have a review of the conditions and opinions in the world to-day in the light of (a) a century of scientific advance and (b) the upheaval of the late war. This record and diagnosis is admirably done, done with a lack of the smaller partialities and with a firm grip of humanist ideas. International, national, and political questions come into focus under the microscope of a liberal mind. It is a mind which, on the whole, seems to take the view of liberalism taken by the radicals of the last century; individualistic, more concerned to advance liberty than to extend the area of communal responsibility. The only approach to passionate partisanship is, perhaps, in the chapter which deals mainly with Russia, "this Red dementia" as the author calls it. If this "from being a public nuisance became a common danger its appeal to force could only be met by one superior in kind." It is not necessary to have Communist sympathies to recognize that the alleged defence of liberty may be, and often has been, the occasion of its grossest violations. The Russia of to-day, like the Germany of to-day, is *un fait accompli*. Here, as in

* *Rationalist Evaluations and the True Direction of Civilization*, by Austen Verney. Heath Cranton. 7s. 6d. net.

his criticism of constructive proposals for treating after-war conditions, especially in England, Mr. Verney does not seem to be quite abreast of average liberal opinion. Most of his suggestions that are practicable are to be found in *Britains Industrial Future* (Benn, 1928), the Report of the Liberal Industrial Enquiry.

Where there is such a wealth of apposite reference it would be ungracious to stress the few omissions and errors. We will only mention two. It was Lord Sumner, in the Bowman case, not Lord Coleridge in the Foote case, who gave the final blow to the legal fiction that "Christianity is part of the common law." (p. 54.)

The first minority Labour Government was not 1929 but 1923-4. The Labour Party, as distinct from organizations affiliated to it, was not explicitly Socialist until 1918 (p. 104.)

The real value of this book is that it provides the serious reader with an excellent introduction to the study of the present in the light of the past. The story of evolution; the long contest between science and established institutions and opinions in Church and State; the great waste of thought and diversion of energy that results from public opinion lagging behind ascertained conclusions; and, not least, effective demonstration that there are no short cuts to personal enlightenment to national or international millennia—all these matters are treated of in these informative pages. If we cannot follow Mr. Verney in the "faith" which is his in particular (if, indeed, we suspect that that faith really is the excellent one that every man should try to see and tell and follow the truth as he finds it), we can at least say that "he is not far from any one of us."

CANDIDATUS.

Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—There was a reference some weeks ago in the *Freethinker* to the Hastings window in Worcester Cathedral, lately unveiled. I remember certain very pertinent comments and questions to which no reply has so far been given.

To-day we find a letter in a prominent position in the *British Medical Journal*, from the Treasurer to the British Medical Association, in which he says, "There is one remaining drawback to this worthy celebration of Sir Charles Hastings. The window is not paid for."

Now, far from bewailing this sad fact, Dr. Bishop Harman, the Council of the Association, and the representative Body, each of whom we are assured has cheerfully subscribed his guinea, ought to welcome this heaven-sent opportunity to confound the critic.

Let Dr. Harman, the Council, and the representative body again repair to Worcester Cathedral. Either these gentlemen believe in the efficacy of prayer or they do not. A united outcry to Heaven for the comparatively small sum of £110 odd, is surely a fair test of their faith. In order to give the experiment a fair chance, I suggest that say four hours after the effort commences and with one or two Freethinkers present to see that there is no deception, the Deity should materialize the £110 odd on the altar.

Let the effort be as well advertised as the unveiling, and a charge be made at the door. This should easily account for the £110, leaving only a small matter of shillings and pence to be accounted for.

I only suggest that the smaller sum be asked for, as perhaps some of these gentlemen may be somewhat out of practice, and perhaps even £110 might be too much of a strain.

The Medical profession is notoriously generous, and the former touching appeal for funds to it having failed, surely the appeal to Heaven is the next best. Loosen their pockets, Good Lord. Or would the Miracle be that the Council, and the representative Body should subscribe this trivial amount out of their own pockets, and not have given the show away as they have done?

M.B.

ON AN ALLEGED "COMMON MENACE."

An Open Letter to the Editor of the "News-Chronicle."

SIR,—This letter would have been addressed to you at Salisbury Square and not in these columns, but that between March, 1931 and now, numerous letters of mine, brief and relevant to topics dealt with by you or in your columns have all found their way into your waste-paper basket. In the course of a good many years' service to newspapers in connexion with my work for Liberal organizations I have had the privilege of supplying much copy to you and to your representatives, and, on occasions, the honour of contributing to your columns, both as a leader-writer and a Special Correspondent. It is not unnatural in these circumstances to assume that there is a reason for this treatment. Nor is the reason difficult to discover. For in the first of the rejected letters I referred to the increasingly "obtrusive piety" of your paper. This was, no doubt, the unforgivable sin.

In a recent issue you refer in a leader to the new move for reunion between the Anglican and Nonconformist Churches. You say: "Unless the Churches can bring themselves to act together against the common menace," the attrition of their ranks will go on. This may be a common menace to the Churches, but you imply, and doubtless mean to imply, that the decline of religion is a menace to the community at large. What are the facts? This largely non-church or non-chapel-going community is, despite the terrible conditions that prevail, increasingly sober, stoically steadfast in emergency, and man for man, and woman for woman, as honourable and as honest as the church and chapel-going minority, and often more so. What menace is involved in the existence of these, the majority, of decent citizens to-day?

As for the proposed moves towards reunion between the Church and dissent, it is notorious that a majority of the Bishops, and the most active and vocal party of the clergy will not assent for a moment to anything which will not be humiliating to Nonconformists. One of these Bishops, only the other day, sneeringly distinguished between "our altars" and "their tables"! The reunion of Christendom would have to include Rome, and Rome's terms are unconditional surrender. Without a shadow of historical or traditional justification the Anglo-Catholics—themselves the paid servants of the Protestant Reformed Religion established by law—offer the same terms to Nonconformists! Anglicans of all shades and dissenters of the various denominations, united, together with Roman Catholics include no more than about 7,000,000 of 37,000,000 in England—excluding Wales and Monmouth. The one motive of this move is the same as animated the Pope's recent letter, to try and have it believed that the rejection of Christianity means Communism, and to stir up all Christians to meet this "common"—and imaginary "menace."

The record of social history for the last hundred years proves that as religion has declined all that makes for improvement has progressed. The "common menace" to progress is Christianity; and it ought not to be the policy of a professedly liberal journal to back up the forces of reaction, and to boycott criticisms of it.

The Church may have "the wind up." The general public is concerned about the state of the nation and the world; but it shows no sign of looking to the divided and dwindling forces of superstition to assist in the promotion of a better national and international order.

As this is a protest against the exclusion not only of anti-religious "copy," but of letters on other matters by and from known Freethinkers, and as the identity of the writer is known to you, I subscribe myself

A LIBERAL JOURNALIST.

How soundly I slept on Sabbath night after the toil of being very good throughout the day.—George Borrow.

Because a man cannot be right in all things, is he to be right in nothing? Because a man sometimes gets drunk, is he therefore to steal? Nay Sir, this doctrine would very soon bring a man to the gallows.—Dr. Johnson.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

LONDON.

INDOOR.

NATIONAL UNION OF TAILORS AND GARMENT WORKERS—Sub-divisional Workers Branch (1 Buckle Street, London, E.1): 8.0, Friday, November 18, Mr. R. H. Rosetti. "Freethinkers and Freethought." Admission free.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (New Morris Hall, 79 Bedford Road, Clapham, S.W.4, near Clapham North Station): 7.30, Fr. Vincent McNabb, O.P.—"Are the Ten Commandments Worth Preserving?"

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Oliver Goldsmith School, Peckham Road): 7.0, Sunday, November 13, Mr. R. D. Stocker—"Julian Huxley: Poet and Scientist."

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1): 11.0, C. Delisle Burns, M.A., D.Lit.—"Freedom in the Modern World."

STUDY CIRCLE (N.S.S. Office, 61 Farringdon Street, E.C.4): 8.0, Monday, November 14, Mr. R. H. Turney will read a paper on—"Professor J. H. Levy and Modern Science."

THE CONWAY DISCUSSION CIRCLE (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1): 7.0, Tuesday, November 13, A. D. Howell-Smith, B.A.—"Dangerous Trends in Modern Sexual Ethics."

THE METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (City of London Hotel, 107 York Road, N.): 6.45, Ettie Rout—"The Medical Prevention of Venereal Disease."

WOOLWICH BRANCH N.S.S. ("Queen's Arms" Lecture Hall, Burrage Road): 7.30, Sunday, November 13, Mr. T. A. Jackson—"Soviets War on Gods." Literature on sale at all meetings.

OUTDOOR.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (White Stone Pond, Hampstead): 11.30, Sunday, November 13, Mr. L. Ebury.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 12.0, Sunday November 13, Mr. B. A. Le Maine, 3.30, Messrs. Bryant, and A. D. Howell-Smith, B.A. 6.30, Messrs. Bryant, and Le Maine. The *Freethinker* and other Pioneer literature can be bought during and after our meetings of Mr. Dunn, outside the Park in Bayswater Road.

WOOLWICH BRANCH N.S.S. (Beresford Square): 11.30, Sunday, November 13, Mr. G. Mead.

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

ASHINGTON (Princess Ballroom): 7.0, Sunday, November 13, Mr. J. T. Brighton—"Is Sunday Sacred?"

BIRKENHEAD (Wirral) BRANCH N.S.S. (Engineers' Hall, Price Street, Birkenhead, near Hamilton Square): 7.0, Sunday, November 13, E. Egerton Stafford (Bootle)—"Flashlights on the Bible."

BRADFORD BRANCH N.S.S. (Godwin Cafe, Godwin Street): 7.30, Sunday, November 13, Mr. T. Townend Bradford—"Morality."

BURNLEY (Westgate): 7.0, November 13, Lecture in Esperanto by Mr. J. Clayton N.S.S.—"Religio; La Amiko de la Virtue."

CHESTER-LE-STREET BRANCH N.S.S. (Branch Rooms, Front Street): 7.0, Sunday, November 13, Mr. T. Clarkson. A lecture.

EAST LANCASHIRE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION (28 Bridge Street, Burnley): 2.30, Sunday, November 16, Mr. Jack Clayton—"The Meaning of Freethought." Questions and Discussion. All welcome.

GLASGOW BRANCH N.S.S. (City Hall, North Saloon, Candle-riggs): 6.30, Sunday, November 13, Mr. R. H. Rosetti (General Secretary N.S.S.)—"Christianity v. Science and Anthropology." Questions and Discussion. Silver collection.

LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Secular Hall, Hummerstone Gate): 6.30, Sunday, November 13, Mr. Chapman Cohen—"The Making of Mass Opinion."

LIVERPOOL (Merseyside) BRANCH N.S.S. (Transport Hall, Islington, entrance in Christian Street): 7.0, Sunday, November 13, H. Little (Liverpool)—"Curious Creeds."

SUNDERLAND BRANCH N.S.S. (Co-operative Buildings, Green Street): Sunday, November 13, Mr. J. Robson. A Lecture.

PLYMOUTH BRANCH N.S.S. (Hall No. 5, Plymouth Chambers, Drake Circus): 7.0, Sunday, November 13, Mr. G. F. H. McCluskey—"Freethought Attack."

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