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

Views and Opinions.

Women in Germany.

GUNMAN HITLER is trying another move in the creation of his new Germany. This time it is directed against women. For the future, and so far as Hitler can manage it, women will be kept to their proper tasks of breeding, cooking, and darning. A number of High Schools for girls are to be closed, preparatory to the ultimate closing of all, and the number of women who are allowed to attend universities is to be restricted. It is also probable that young women may have to pass a period in a labour camp so that there may be developed in them a fitting conception of what is a woman's duty.

The proper German formula for indicating the sphere of women is "Church, Kitchen and Children." Women are to travel between the Church, the kitchen and the nursery. The inclusion of the Church is highly significant, for Hitler's teaching is not merely genuinely Christian, but it is only by the aid of religious compulsion that he can hope to succeed in his aim. Mere secular compulsion could never give the promise of permanency that religion can afford. Remove the supernatural authority for ideas and institutions and the promise of permanent security is gone. Then ideas are reduced to the test of verification and institutions to the test of utility. And these are extremely dangerous things. To ask whether a statement is true is a threat to every crowned lie in the neighbourhood; and to ask whether an institution is useful threatens the existence of every vested interest. But a "Thus saith the Lord," is as secure against change or reform as anything can be in a world where even the immortality of the gods cannot be guaranteed.

Religion and Women.

The inclusion of the Church in the formula is thus both logical and eminently Christian. For many of the great teachers of the Christian Church have not

merely held women as an animal inferior to man, but that she is also a very dangerous animal. To the great preacher St. Chrysostom she was:—

A necessary evil, a desirable calamity, a deadly fascination, a painted ill.

To the great Tertullian she was:—

The devil's gateway . . . the unsealer of the forbidden tree . . . the first deserter of the divine law.

And that eminent Christian lawgiver, John Knox, said:—

To promote a woman to bear rule, superiority, dominion or empire above any realm, nation or city, is repugnant to nature, contemptible to God, a thing most contrarious to his revealed will and approved ordinance . . . From all women, be she married or unmarried is all authorities taken . . . Because in the nature of woman lurketh such vices as in good governors are not tolerable.

The New Testament does not give woman power over man, it gives man power over woman. It does not say that woman is to be so educated that she may become the teacher of man, but that she is to learn of man in silence and subjection, and that when she goes to Church she must keep silence, and not disturb the slumbers of her earthly lord with her talkativeness. Somehow or other women have in certain cases escaped from the rules laid down by the New Testament and by leading Christians, but it is to be counted against this that the largest Christian Churches still refuse women the same right of teaching that they give to men. Hitler, is therefore only putting into practice essential Christian teaching, and in the end he must depend upon religion if he is to do with women as he would wish. Nothing else can give him the same promise of security, and even religion in Germany may prove powerless against a creature "in whom lurketh such vices" as good Christian leaders have depicted. And, after all, even Germany cannot continue to ill-treat their own women-folk with the same ease that they ill-treat Jewish women and the women of wicked Communists and Socialists.

* * *

Let us be Thorough.

But, if I may advise friend Hitler. Why close only the High Schools to girls? Why forbid them the universities only? Hitler should be more logical. Just before the French Revolution of 1789, when the question of the equality of the sexes was much to the front, a French writer, with that display of wit and logic so often found in French writers, published a small pamphlet entitled *Should Women be Allowed to Learn the Alphabet?* It was but a small pamphlet, it would have made no impression whatever on those who are impressed only by the size of a book, and who think profound any work so long as it is obscure; but this pamphlet went to the root of the subject. For the writer argued that if you wish to stop women

competing with men in the world of knowledge you must commence with the alphabet. Forbid them to learn that. Keep them, not merely out of the high schools, but out of the elementary schools also. There can be no guarantee with a woman who can read a Hitlerite manifesto, that she may not surreptitiously read a Socialistic pamphlet. No one can be certain that a girl who is able to read the *Universe* or the *Christian Herald* may not also read the *Freethinker*. There is no promise of permanent security in an order not to read; there is no magic in a "Verboten." The Church tried that plan, and failed. It burned the books that men had written, and it burned the authors for writing them. The godly Czar of Russia, whose loss so many upright Englishmen profoundly mourn, tried Siberia, and the knout, and all conceivable barbarities to stop people reading revolutionary pamphlets and books. But it was all in vain. These methods can only delay the evil day of enlightenment; they cannot prevent its ultimate appearance. We must be logical. Commence with the alphabet. If Hitler wishes to succeed in reconciling modern women to the Christian routine of Church, Children, and Cooking, it is little use closing the high schools, or even some of them, to girls. He must close every school. As the New Testament has it, it is not given to the woman to teach. She must learn in silence with all subjection, and if she would know anything let her ask her husband.

* * *

Strike at the Roots.

The principle indicated by the French writer has a very wide application. It is so important that it should be engraved on the heart of every dictator, and on the forehead of every priest. It applies to religion and politics with at least equal strength, and it does not apply only to the specific problem of the position of women. The only Church that has fully recognized the universality of this principle is the Roman Church. It saw from the beginning, as so great a man as Bossuet said, that Protestantism carried within it the seeds of its own dissolution. Even though you at the same time prove by your actions that you mean nothing of the kind, it is impossible to advise men to think for themselves without some taking you quite seriously, and crediting you with a degree of intellectual clarity and honesty that you may not possess. The Roman Church cannot be charged with this error. It could not prevent people learning the alphabet of letters, but it did its best to prevent their learning the alphabet of religious criticism. It told its followers what they must not read, and, when it could, it suppressed and burned all forbidden books. It forbade men, save in the case of a few and under such conditions that minimised the danger of their learning, to master even the alphabet of the criticism of religion. It said quite properly: "If men are permitted to criticize, where are they to stop, and who can be sure that they will stop?" Gods are killed by a note of interrogation, Governments begin to totter with the first whispers of discontent, Churches crumble with the first faint visions of a higher and more human life. When Voltaire was told of Saint Denis walking a hundred paces with his head under his arm, he said that it was easy enough to believe ninety-nine of these steps, it was the first one that was difficult. It is always the first step that is important.

* * *

The Safety of Contentment.

Consider another point. A long time ago some people began to talk about raising the level of the poor and tried to cultivate the taste of the "lower" classes for better things. That was a mistake. They were

ready to teach the "lower classes" the alphabet of luxury and enlightenment, but failed to recognize that once set going, what or who was to prevent their mastering the encyclopedia? A separate bedroom for each adult member of the family simply led to the desire for bigger rooms and better rooms. To have meat for dinner more than one day a week inevitably led to the desire for meat every day in the week. Teach men to read and they develop the desire for books. Permit them to ride in a baby Austin and their minds begin to soar towards a Rolls Royce. Give the working man a ten hour day and he presently demands a maximum of eight, then of six. Set a ball rolling down a hill-side and it will not stop until it reaches the bottom. Every time a desire is created it fights for satisfaction, and every desire once established becomes a need and will be gratified at all costs. Almost the entire struggle of the working classes of the world is for the gratification of what were once, for them, almost extravagant desires, but which are now among the most imperative of needs.

It is all a mistake. To hope to stop an explosion when one has set fire to the powder is absurd. If whole bodies of men are to be kept in the place to which God and their pastors and masters have been pleased to call them, they must be prevented acquiring the alphabet of luxury and refinement. If men and women are to be quite content with the old language of subservience they must not be taught the alphabet of human equality. If Hitler wishes the women of Germany to remain nothing more than breeders, cooks, and good churchgoers he must do more than keep them out of the universities, he must prevent their learning the alphabet of development. But once let men and women get hold of the alphabets of liberty, of refinement, of luxury, and no power on earth can prevent them from trying to master the whole of the language. That is why the man of ideas is so more disturbing, so much more dangerous a force than the man of mere action. For the man of action may be killed, and he and his action disappear from the scene. But the man of ideas is not thus easily disposed of. This man may also be killed but the ideas that have been born to him remain, and, like the fabled phoenix rising to a new life from the ashes of its own body, they achieve a new and larger growth with the men and women to whom they are bequeathed.

CHAPMAN COLLES.

Respice Finem.

HERE, in the Spring,
When tempted much to sing,
My thoughts dwell on another thing.

We shall behold,
When this year has grown old,
The woods and fields sodden and cold.

Cold, driving rain
Will surely come again,
And all will shiver and complain.

Then we shall see
This beautiful green tree
Face Winter's deadly enmity.

Mark, then, this truth,
Dame Nature has no ruth;
Old age and death succeed to youth.

Enjoy the Spring,
With its fair promising,
But yet remember Winter's sting.

BAYARD SIMMONS.

"Doth God Care For Oxen?"

"What good is like to this;
To do worthy the writing, and to write
Worthy the reading and the World's delight?"

Daniel.

"Write me as one who loves his fellow-men."

Leigh Hunt.

THE British people are reputed to be one of the kindest that exist, yet there are societies in Britain for the protection of children, and organizations for the care of animals, which show clearly that the benevolence is not so deeprooted as it might be. Cruelty is still far too prevalent, despite two thousand years of Christian teaching. The reports of these different Societies for social amelioration make terrible reading, for they form an indictment of our boasted Christian civilization which is calculated to lower our national esteem.

Indeed, the boast of the priests that the very moderate humanism that we possess is due to their creed and not to purely secular causes is sheer nonsense. Abyssinia has been Christian far longer than Britain, yet Ethiopia is disgraced by the presence of the very worst form of slavery extant, the unfortunate slaves being counted by millions. Spain is a very Christian country, but the national pastime of bull-fighting shows that piety is not incompatible with cruelty. So one might go on, but sufficient has been said to point the moral.

Even in Britain some of the philanthropic organizations are strangely restricted in their outlook. One society, boasting royal patronage, seems to think that the animal kingdom consists of cats, dogs, horses, chickens and a stray tortoise. Apparently, foxes and stags are only found in museums, alongside of eggs of the great auk. Such modesty can hardly place any society among the forces of progress, however aristocratic may be its list of patrons, however big its bank balance.

The friends of humanity need not despair because of the flunkeyism and timidity of some philanthropists, for one organization, the Humanitarian League, with which Henry S. Salt's name is inseparably associated, did challenge loudly contemporary convention for over a quarter of a century, 1890-1918. It was one of the noblest and most useful organizations in this country. Its constant purpose was to consolidate the principle of humaneness, which it rightly considered should be an essential part of any intelligible system of society. The scope of the League's activities was very wide. It dealt with such questions as Militarism, Criminal Law and Prison Reform, Cruel Sports, Humane Diet and Dress, Education of Children, Flogging in the Services, the Humanizing of the old, cruel Poor Law, Vivisection, and scores of other needful reforms.

The moving spirit throughout of the Humanitarian League was Henry Stephens Salt, a pioneer among pioneers, who has devoted a long life to the service of his fellow-men. Born in India in 1851, the life of this great social reformer has its touch of romance. Educated at Eton, he became one of the house-masters; and at Cambridge University he absorbed sufficient culture to make him one of the most urbane and scholarly of contemporary authors. So marked, indeed, is urbanity in all his varied works, that whilst challenging convention at so many points, he is ever without the slightest trace of fanaticism. There is no bitterness at all in his criticism. Though he ploughed a lonely furrow, he has never been morbid. Taking things at their true worth, he has never been surprised by views he could not accept. He has merely acknowledged, courteously, that they were so very different from his own.

Beginning by reading Shelley's Atheistic poetry, and by absorbing the intellectual audacities of Henry Thoreau and Walt Whitman, young Mr. Salt soon conceived human society as a great brotherhood, and afterwards sought to put his high ideals into practice in the activities of the Humanitarian League, which made his life a ceaseless effort on behalf of his fellows.

Few reformers are humorists, but Mr. Salt's humour was one of his most likeable qualities. How good is his description of Eton as "the nursery of Toryism." And how unforgettable his terse summing-up of the ideals of the Medieval Public Schools and the Universities as being "brawn, and not brains." Recall the fine flavour of his jest that one of the speakers on "Penal Reform" at a Humanitarian League meeting possessed an "inside knowledge" of his subject. But readers must turn to Mr. Salt's numerous volumes, for such gems scintillate better in their original setting than when torn from their context.

Had he been less of a reformer, he might have made a great name for himself in literature. His fine studies of Shelley, Richard Jefferies, De Quincey, Thoreau, and James Thomson, prove his devotion to letters. His charming humour is displayed in his *Consolations of a Faddist*, whilst his scholarship is unquestioned in his spirited rendering of *The Treasures of Lucretius*. In another mood, he has emulated George Borrow, and his *On Cambrian and Cumbrian Hills* is not without its touch of genius.

The phase of Mr. Salt's activities which will last the longest, is his dauntless championship for a quarter of a century of the Humanitarian Movement and of the rights of animals. He will always be remembered, not so much as a graceful writer, but as a chivalrous knight-errant ever seeking out forlorn, oppressed, or distressed and deserving causes in whose behalf to break a lance, on whom to lavish his passion of pity, and satisfy his yearning for service. His whole career is a discourse on the indispensability of reformers, who do their best to alleviate "the weariness, the fever, and the fret" of life. If Freethinkers, still true to the long line of their illustrious pioneers, keep his fine achievements in their memory, then better than the world's applause will be the sympathies of his fellow-soldiers in the Army of Human Liberation. For, as Shakespeare nobly says, "Spirits are not finely touched but to fine issues."

MIMNERMUS.

Christianity and the Child.

(Concluded from page 422.)

IN all the schools of the Middle Ages the rod and the birch were the main instruments used in instruction. There were no exceptions. The sons of the highest in the land, even those of the King himself, had to submit to chastisement.

When the son of Henry V. of England was placed under the tutelage of the Earl of Warwick, the Earl informs the Council that as his pupil grows in years and stature, he becomes less amenable to discipline and protests more and more against the chastenings he receives. The Earl therefore submits his difficulty to the Council and seeks the seal of their authority to cover his actions:—

It was a delightful position. The theory of education demanded that the King should be thrashed early and often, while the bloodiness of the age rendered it probable that the King, as soon as he came of age, would have his wretched guardian murdered for doing his duty. The Privy Council

were asked therefore not only to sanction, but to order the use of the rod in the upbringing of the royal boy.¹

It is quite clear, from the above, that severe thrashing and beating were regarded as an integral, necessary, and important part in the education of the child, and could not be dispensed with even in the case of a King; for that was what the boy was, his father, Henry V., dying when he was two months old. It was not the first time the Council had interfered; before the year 1428 it had ordered "That the kyng be chastysed for his defaultes," that the fear of it may incline him "to vertue and lernynge."

These barbarous ideas and practices continued right down to modern times. Even in our most aristocratic Public Schools during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the punishments were of merciless severity, and the sons of Dukes were flogged with the same impartiality as the sons of tradesmen. As Mr. Horace Wyndham observes:—

Pedagogic opinion long held that the birch rod was the only effective method of driving knowledge into (and misconduct out of) small boys. It was the "system" hallowed by tradition. Eton and Westminster, where the activities of Keate and Busby have become proverbial, did not stand alone in this respect. Harrow, Rugby, and Winchester, together with every other school in the three kingdoms, all kept birch and block in constant employment. . . Dr. Wordsworth, an ex-headmaster of Winchester, says of his predecessor, Dr. Ridding, "It was not unusual of him to castigate not less than fifty boys at a time." Dr. Gabell [also of Winchester] once proposed spending a "solid day" with a colleague, Dr. Parr of Norwich. "Let us meet," he suggested, "and quaff a bumper to the good cause of flogging." This friend of his, the Rev. Dr. Parr, appears to have been something of a modern Orbilius. "I never remember him," says one of his scholars, "with any instrument of correction but the rod; and that uniformly applied where it could do the brain no harm. A peculiar expression of complacency sat upon his countenance, as if fully satisfied with the usefulness of the infliction and resolved to do his duty in spite of vulgar clamour."²

A similar Spartan code prevailed at Harrow, says the same writer. Anthony Trollope, who was at Harrow under Dr. Butler, tells us in his *Autobiography*, that Dr. Butler: "was in the habit of flogging me constantly." Dr. Butler was an ordained clergyman and became Dean of Peterborough. Longley, who succeeded Butler at Harrow, flogged fifty boys in one morning. He also was in holy orders, and afterwards became Archbishop of Canterbury. Of Dr. Keate, headmaster of Eton from 1809 to 1834, we are told: "he is best remembered for the vigorous floggings he inflicted on the boys."³ He also held a living in Hampshire and was a Canon of Windsor. Dr. Keate ruled Eton with an iron hand for twenty-five years, says Mr. Wyndham: "During the whole of that period the birch was his sceptre and the block his throne." And further:—

Of his prowess in this respect there are innumerable stories. He is said to have established a record by bringing to the block a batch of ninety at one fell swoop; and, under the impression that they had committed some delinquency, to have administered the rod to a number of candidates for confirmation. "You are only adding to your offence by profanity and lying," he declared, when a victim attempted to point out the error. (Wyndham: *Victorian Sensations*, p. 61.)

Busby, Headmaster of Westminster School, who is said to have educated more distinguished men than any other master, was so notorious for his floggings that his name became a byword for harshness. He also was an ordained clergyman and a Prebendary of Westminster. In fact, to be an ordained clergyman seems to have been a prime qualification for the position of head to these great schools until quite recent times. A writer in the *Edinburgh Review*, cited by Mr. Wyndham, tells us:—

For all offences, except the most trivial, whether for insubordination in or out of school, for inability to construe a lesson or to say it by heart, for being discovered out of bounds, for absence from chapel or school—in short for any breach of the regulations of the school—every boy below the Sixth Form (whatever his age) is punished by flogging. This operation is performed on the naked back by the headmaster himself, who is always a gentleman of great abilities and acquirements, and sometimes of high dignity in the Church.

At Eton, under the rule of Dr. Goodford (1853-1862) says Mr. Wyndham: "the bluest blood in England may be said to have stained the library carpet; and the twigs of the avenging rod fell on patrician cuticles just as surely as they did on those of plebeian origin." The punishment block consisted of two wooden steps, upon which the victim had to kneel. Montague Williams, who became a distinguished barrister, suffered punishment at Eton and has described the procedure: "When," he says, "any member of the Upper School was punished, the punishment took place in the headmaster's room, where the block was kept. . . The sufferer was in the hands of two holders-down while the punishment was being inflicted, and the number of cuts regulated by the gravity of the offence."⁴

Such a state of barbarism seems incredible to us to-day. What has caused the change? Certainly no credit is due to Christianity. This system of educating by terror, with the rod and the birch, had been in vogue for hundreds of years. Christian ministers of the highest rank administered the punishment. Christian parents made no objection to, but approved of it.

The change came about, not through religion, but in spite of it; the change came with the wave of humanitarian feeling permeating Europe as the result of the Voltairian campaign against the cruelty and iniquity of the Church. The rise of the humanitarian spirit corresponded with the decay of religion. This is the most humanitarian age the world has ever seen, and it is acknowledged on all hands, to be the least religious.

If the boys in the high schools suffered, the boys in the lower class schools fared still worse. Charles Dickens with his *Oliver Twist* and *Nicholas Nickleby*, did more to rouse public opinion on the subject than all the Churches, which did nothing. Dickens was a Unitarian, and Unitarians are not recognized as Christians at all by the more orthodox believers. That eminent Christian, Sir Robertson Nicoll, says of Dickens: "there cannot be any mistake as to the intense *animus* against Dissenting Ministers."⁵ He also quotes Sir Leslie Stephen, who says "he seems to have held that every dissenting minister was a 'Stiggins.'"

As for the poor children who had no schooling at all, and were thrust into the mill at seven and eight years of age, to work for twelve hours a day, their lot was terrible. "Cobbett describes how women took their children to the mill through the snow; the

¹ R. Godfrey: *English Children in the Olden Time*, pp. 118-119.

² Wyndham: *Victorian Sensations*, pp. 57-58.

³ *Universal Encyclopædia*. Article "Keate."

⁴ Wyndham: *Victorian Sensations*, p. 68.

⁵ Nicoll: *Dickens's Own Story*, p. 170.

child was crying, but the mother was crying too." As the Hammonds point out: "The system imposed on children more work and longer hours than human nature could bear, and somebody had to wring it out of them." In consequence: "Fathers beat their own children to save them from a worse beating by some one else; overseers and spinners beat children, sometimes no doubt from sheer brutality, but often because they had to get so much work out of them or go."

What did the Church and the Wesleyans, who were evangelizing England at that time, do for the children, or their parents? They told the people to be patient, to respect authority and obey the powers that be. They must accept the lot to which God had appointed them, and they would have their reward in the life to come, if they attended the services of the Church, or Chapel, as the case might be. They must pile up treasure in heaven and not seek for that on earth. And that is real Christianity.

W. MANN.

⁶ Hammond: *The Town Labourer*, p. 32.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

"Lawlessness in the Church."

(A SATIRE.)

"The Church of England, as by Law established" is very wise in its own conceits. Therein it expresses the religious genius of the English People.

It delights in saying things which it does not mean—which, in fact, it can not mean. And it revels in retaining Laws which it has no intention of honouring. It is never happy unless the dead hand of the past lies affectionately upon its shoulder, restraining it from enthusiasms.

Are not all enthusiasms of the devil? Is it dignified for an Archbishop to run, in anything but a metaphorical sense?

Did Peter really *run* to the sepulchre?

What great respect is due to the things which grandfather did, and to the ways in which grandfather did them! Not because they were right, nor because they were the best ways; but for the simple reason that grandfather was the doer thereof.

So the Church of England as by Law established maintains the "Constitutions and Canons Ecclesiastical" which were first promulgated nearly 400 years ago. And, in consequence,

No Ecclesiastical Person shall wear any Coif or wrought Night-cap, but only plain Night-caps of black silk, satin, or velvet.

The meaning of this Law is "not to attribute any holiness or special worthiness to the said garments, but for decency, gravity, and order."

In face of such an outlook, could one of the Bishops of this Church view with any sympathetic eye the suggestions of William Booth that he should be allowed to hold preachings and singings at street corners, having, for music, a cornet or a common concertina? The decency and gravity of the Church, as by Law established, could not be so offended!

Even the wonderful Indian mystic, Sadhu Sundar Singh (known to London audiences and to students of Oxford), could not be given the authority and grace of Orders in this Church as by Law established, unless he would forego his Call to Open Spaces and to the Cities and Villages of India and of the World, and be confined to a Diaconate and Priesthood of given area and jurisdiction.

The methods of dealing with John and Charles

Wesley must be the methods of dealing with enthusiasts for all time.

Nevertheless, once in Orders within this Church, "No man being admitted a Deacon or Minister shall from thenceforth voluntarily relinquish the same, nor afterwards use himself in the course of his life as a layman, upon pain of excommunication."

Thus an Indian Chaplain who relinquishes Orders and goes to cultivate oranges in South Africa—of which there was a case known—can no longer be a member of this Church of England as by Law Established.

And woe to that man who shall "affirm or maintain that there are within the realm other meetings, assemblies, or congregations of the King's born subjects, than such as by the Laws of the land are held and allowed, which may rightly challenge to themselves the name of true and lawful Churches! Let him be excommunicated . . . and not restored until after revocation of his wicked errors."

We note, therefore, with smug satisfaction, that certain congregations and assemblies do not venture to call themselves "true and lawful Churches." They take to themselves the non-committal designation—"Free Churches."

It is comforting to know that, in theory, these Free Churches have no existence. How is it possible for them to exist when all "Churchwardens or Questmen of every parish [note the "every"] shall diligently see that all parishioners duly resort to their Church upon Sundays and Holy Days, and there continue the whole time of Divine Service; and none to walk or to stand idle or talking in the Church, or in the Churchyard, or in the Church-porch, during that time."

Any person guilty—being found "slack or negligent"—shall be duly called upon. And if the visit of the Warden does not impress him, he shall be "presented." But this "presentation" is not to the Court at Buckingham Palace: the "presentation" shall be made at the Bishop's Palace.

In the curious old-world language of Canon 90, the Bishop is designated "The Ordinary of the place."

We observe that the word Ordinary begins with a capital letter. His Lordship is no ordinary *person*. Nor even an ordinary *parson*.

Now, although we have not—since space forbids—noticed all the Laws which this Church of England as by Law established maintains (in theory, pray!) yet there is one which must be quoted ere we close our eyes and fold our hands in the sleep of perfect contentment:—

If any Preacher shall, in Pulpit particularly, or namely, of purpose, impugn or confute any doctrine delivered by any other Preacher in the same Church, or in any Church near adjoining, before he hath acquainted the Bishop of the diocese therewith, and received order from him what to do in that case, because upon such public dissenting and contradicting there may grow much offence and disquietness unto the people; the Churchwardens, or party aggrieved, shall forthwith signify the same to the Bishop, and not suffer the Preacher any more to occupy that place which he hath once abused.

And if it be a Bishop who contravenes this Law, then shall the matter be reported in the *Daily Scream*, and such Bishop shall be publicly fêted at dinners and teas, until he professes sorrow for the cause of his popularity. Before which time he shall not be allowed to return to the tranquillity and the serenity of his episcopal palace.

Notwithstanding all of which, *Churchwardens shall, with meticulous care, be yearly chosen in Easter-week!*

Even lawlessness must know some bounds.

AN IMPATIENT PARSON.

Religion and Education.

REFERRING again to the apparent use of learned societies by some individuals to propagate their religious or other traditional opinions, reference may be made to a pamphlet lately issued by the Historical Association on *Medieval Education in England*, written by R. B. Hepple, Barrister-at-Law. Here we find the following statement: "Whatever education there was, and whatever progress was made, was due to the influence of the Church. From 598 to 1500 she was the patron and nursing mother of . . . Letters." Now it would have been a real miracle if Christianity—after it had absorbed the unintellectual system of the ancient Hebrews, after announcing that the new religion was appreciable by the ignorant, even by fools and babes, and after Augustine (in his later writings) had told the people that it is the ignorant who attain heaven—had become a patron of learning.

It is pleasing to record that the pamphlet was followed by a letter in *History* (the organ of the Association), in which, after much detailed criticism, Prof. Coulton's verdict was approvingly quoted, viz., that the medieval writers who talk of an educational system in the Middle Ages have hitherto hopelessly failed to prove that good intentions ever descended from theory to practice. (The ascription of "good intentions" seems to be all too generous.)

The general story of the intellectual and educational darkness of Europe during the ten or more centuries following the decline and fall of Rome has been well and copiously told both by Freethinkers and educationists. But in view of the egregious claims still made by a few medievalists a few significant points may be usefully considered here.

As regards the approach to and the earlier part of the Dark Ages, there is an interesting passage in Sir F. G. Kenyon's *Books and Readers in Ancient Greece and Rome*, giving the result of an enquiry into the number of books (papyri) extant in Egypt, a part of the Roman Empire where the climate favoured the preservation of the writings, during the first seven centuries A.D. The number increased from 117 to 341 in the first two centuries; in the third, when Christianity was becoming powerful, there was a decrease to 304; in the fourth, when the new religion became established, the number fell to 83; and, following further reductions, the total for the seventh century was 13. "There is," writes the author, "no reason to doubt the general application of these numbers to the Hellenistic world." And there is no reason to doubt that Christianity was mainly responsible for the wholesale destruction of classical works.

All this was to be expected as a result of the condemnation of ordinary extant knowledge and thought as useless and even wicked—the science because it did not square with the Christian legends and other doctrine, and the literature because it contained references to the rival mythology of Greece and Rome.

The disappearance of the libraries, universities and schools naturally followed from such notions. Dr. Boyd, the well known historian of education, says it is "doubtful whether even in 430 the schools of higher learning were in existence"; and of the schools in general, he writes: "All that can be said with certainty about them is that they were flourishing in the fourth century . . . and that with few exceptions they had disappeared by the sixth century."

These statements fit in excellently with a well known letter of Pope Gregory (written about 600 A.D.) to a bishop in Gaul, who, presumably, was still teaching something beyond the smattering of elementary knowledge required for ecclesiastical purposes, plus theology: "After that we heard a thing that cannot be repeated without a feeling of shame—namely, that you are teaching grammar to some ('grammar' being then a general name for classical literature). This filled us with so deep a disdain that we fell from our former praise of you to mourning and sorrow, because the praises of Jove must never be heard from the mouth that praises Christ." Following this and more matter of the same

kind, the Bishop is told that he must relinquish the study of "trifles and secular letters."

Though in a sense it may be said that the schools were destroyed by the barbarians, it remains a significant fact that little or no effort could have been made by the powerful Church of the time to preserve or subsequently to replace the schools. It is quite clear that the Christian leaders in general despised ordinary education. Tertullian said it was "robbery of God."

The result is well stated by Prof. Compayre, another well known historian of education (and by no means a Freethinker): "Once the Pagan schools were closed, Christianity did not open others, and after the fourth century a profound night enveloped humanity. The labour of the Greeks and Romans was as though it had never been."

Thus the widespread literacy of preceding times was followed by a long period during which doubtless 95 if not 99 per cent of the people were illiterate in every European country, except for a time in Spain, when it was occupied by the Moors. Of this there is abundant evidence. Dr. Beattie, in *A Brief History of Education* tells us that at the outbreak of the French Revolution (1789) less than half the men and only one fourth of the women were able to sign their names to their marriage certificates; that in England, in 1820, as Lord Brougham stated in Parliament, the number attending school did not exceed one in sixteen of the whole population. And as late as 1840 Mulhall's *Dictionary of Statistics* gave 59 as the percentage of literacy for the United Kingdom and 49 for France; while for three of the most Catholic (Roman or Greek) countries the percentages then were Italy 16, Spain 14, Russia 2.

J. REEVES.

Jungle Ways with Sex.

THEY do these things better in the African jungle. Such an observation might easily and justly be made after one has read Mr. W. B. Seabrook's amazing *Jungle Ways*. (Messrs. Harrap, 5s.).

Mr. Seabrook spent several months among the natives of West Africa, some of whom are cannibals, and his book is not merely a polite account of strange people, it is a frank and complete description of the African native's attitude to sexual hygiene.

Mr. Seabrook meets a witch, Wamba, and he goes with her to a circumcision class. He found in the forest a sacred college where "young maidens, brides-to-be, spared nonsense of storks and cabbage heads, were instructed in the sacred facts of life."

The circumcision ceremony had been performed three weeks previously, and the class of nine girls were almost ready to be dismissed. Wamba explained to Seabrook that the ceremony at one time had been performed with an iron knife, but now Gillette safety razor blades were used. Wamba then showed her white visitor how the excision of the surplus folds inside the lips of vagina was all that had been done. Mr. Seabrook pours scorn on the belief that in the operation among the West Coast people the clitoris is excised, and dismisses it as an example of learned ethnographic nonsense.

Wamba also showed him a syringe made from a long-handled gourd shaped like an ordinary retort. This syringe was filled with water and medicant, and operated by blowing hard through a little hole in the top of the gourd. Every decent Yafouba household possessed one, so Seabrook was told.

Further inland Mr. Seabrook found a corresponding ceremony carried out for male circumcision.

The Habbe tribe initiates its boys into manhood, first of all washing them, circumcising them, and then sending them into a new club house where they remain for a time.

When they recover from the effects of the ceremony they run wild for three days and nights, doing what they like and generally painting the jungle red. They cannot be

punished for their escapades during this period. At the end of three days the boys become solemn and grave to show they have become "small grown ups." They then make sacrifices and can invite the girls they like best to come to sleep with them in the club house. After a time the boys find the girls whom they seem to like best of all and then the marriages take place. But before a girl can marry she must show that she can have a healthy baby. If a girl had a baby before she is married she is treated with honour, and the baby welcomed with great rejoicing.

With great bitterness Mr. Seabrook compares this with the customs of a civilized country where "if a girl was ruined, she was ruined, and that was an end of it for her. As for the girl herself she had to go away and decent people had the satisfaction of knowing that she was rotten from the start. Sometimes she tried to have an abortion or killed her baby and tried to hide it, or didn't try to hide it, but just jumped into the creek and drowned herself. At any rate the community was well rid of her."

BAY.

Acid Drops.

The Bishop of Kensington thinks that Bishops ought to wear a different kind of uniform from that at present in vogue. He says the present dress is designed for horse-riding, and is absurd when one drives a car. The Bishop is suffering from lack of information or of candour. It is true that the present uniform was designed while horse-back riding was the principal mode of locomotion for those who did not walk, but it was not designed for that purpose. The Bishop ought to know something of the origin and history of his own order, for there is plenty of literature dealing with the natural history of parsons.

Not the bishop's gaiters, but the distinctive dress of the medicine-man goes back to the dawn of human history. The primitive medicine-man for purposes of disguise, or for purposes of magic adopts all sorts of disguises of dress and painting and masks. And as religion is the last thing to change, and always lives by a perpetuation of past customs and dead ideas, the priest is the most stupidly conservative of all. The spectacle of men trying to settle the question of divorce, or the conditions of labour, or the right use of Sunday by what a body of half-civilized people said thousands of years ago is an instance of the same thing in another direction. It is astonishing that the Bishop of Kensington does not know all this. What on earth *does* he read in these days?

But in all friendliness we would warn the Bishop that he is running a distinct risk if he encourages any move that will lead parsons, high or low, to dress like ordinary men. For remember the parson is in a privileged position, financial and otherwise. And he is so because he is not as ordinary men are. He is called to his job by the direct wish of the national Joss. He is the one person in the country, with the exception of Spiritualists, who claims to be an authority on the next world, and absolutely the only one who can tell us with any certainty what the wishes of the "true God" are. Now in what way does the ordinary person discover these things? It is not because the parson is better informed or wiser than other people. The stage, which usually in a rough and ready way strives to represent the popular view on most matters, usually depicts the parson as a downright fool, or one who is full of sickly sentimentality with a dash of humbug. He is not better than others, for the appearance of the parson in the police and other courts is common enough. The only way that the man in the street can tell that the parson is selected by God and carries at least some of the authority of God is that he is dressed differently from other people. Take his dress away, and he becomes as ordinary folk, to be judged on his personal attainments and merit. And that means the end of the parson. The Bishop must be cautious.

From the *Methodist Recorder* :—

What would have happened last Sunday in the German Protestant Churches if President Hindenburg had not intervened it is impossible to say. The General Superintendants had bidden their followers observe the day as a day of penitence and prayer for Church and Fatherland. The Nazi State Commissioner for the Protestant Churches in Prussia directed that the day should be one of thanksgiving for the boon of Nazi rule, and that a message should be read in all the churches explaining that it is a matter of thanksgiving that the State, which at present has so much on its hands, should nevertheless find time to deliver the Church from disorder and to reorganize and unify it.

The German Churches, of course, have no conscientious objection to using the State and its powers for the Churches' own ends, but they conscientiously object to having the State use the Churches for its particular ends. Both parties in this dispute, it may be noted, are Christian parties, and each is in possession of a Christian conscience—which is another instance of how remarkable a thing the Christian conscience really is!

Our contemporary *John Bull* devotes two pages to a "reverent" boost of the fatuous Buchman Group—which, somehow or other, quite a number of people confuse with the Oxford Movement, because it also calls itself the "Oxford Group." England seems to be a favourite dumping ground for American evangelists—Moody and Sankey and Torrey and Dowie, and various Hot Gospelers or Four Squarites, and they all can depend on a beautiful write-up in our national press in the interests of religion. The Buchman crowd specialize in public "confessions" and *John Bull* gives some examples which leave no doubt of the terrible havoc religion makes with the ordinary intellect.

A "pillar" of the Church, it seems "publicly confessed he was intolerant, bigoted and harsh." We don't doubt it for a moment, but we certainly doubt that anything Dr. Buchman could do will alter the "pillar's" religious character. Other public "confessions" deal—of course—with sexual sins such as "secret impurities and disease," and with cheating, lying and theft. Most of the people who confess to all these amiable weaknesses were quite incurably religious before they joined the Groupites, so one is still left wondering as to the precise value of religion—indeed, of any religion, including Buchmanism. *John Bull* says, "no one can see the end of it." We can—it will die as Moodyism and Torreyism died. Laughter will kill it.

Death by accident, whatever the cause, is dreadful enough, and we don't care to make any comments on such calamities, but we should like to have Mr. James Douglas's opinion on the poor girl who was struck by lightning and killed recently while she was reciting the Rosary. Had it been a Freethinker reading *Bible Romances* at a meeting, Douglas would have filled columns of unctuous fatuities. And what have Roman Catholics to say?

The *Daily Express* in commenting upon the possible resignation of Sir John Reith, does not hide his "rigid narrow-mindedness" which has "resulted in the irrefutable correctness (*sic*) of the B.C.C. programmes and the religious atmosphere of Sunday transmissions. These are directly traceable to his Scottish Presbyterian upbringing." We are glad notice to this has been directed of hundreds of thousands of people who are also told that "he cannot see the other man's point of view." And this is the kind of man put in almost complete authority of such an undertaking as Empire Broadcasting! No wonder that prospective buyers of new wireless sets first make certain that they can get foreign stations. The "irrefutable correctness" of our Sunday is one of the horrors of broadcast programmes.

God is getting more and more interested in the B.B.C. There is Sir John Reith who quite believes he is doing the work of God in moronising the air by loading it

with tons of sermonid idiocy and preventing any wicked Freethinker saying a word against Christianity; and there is outside Broadcast House the inscription that the building has been erected to the glory of God. Now, the Rev. Melville Dinwiddie, of Aberdeen, announces that he has been appointed Director of Broadcasting for Scotland. This gentleman says that he believes it to be "A call from God," and therefore cannot avoid giving up his present job and taking this new one—we presume that the salary will increase proportionately to the importance of the task and as some solace to Mr. Dinwiddie in having to part from his congregation. And the picture of God Almighty looking all over the British Isles and then selecting Mr. Dinwiddie as his representative in Scottish broadcasting is very affecting. But for the well-known humility which is a characteristic feature of Christianity, we should be inclined to call Mr. Dinwiddie's certainty that God selected him as either an exhibition of conceit on the one side or bad judgment on the other.

Mr. Herbert Phillips thinks that "in all this turmoil we have one priceless asset—the brains, energy, and idealism of youth." In this connexion it may be said that the Churches are well aware of the "priceless asset," and are strenuously striving to divert it into religious channels. Trying to take advantage of youthful innocence and ignorance, they are endeavouring to noble the brains, energy, and idealism of youth for "God." They may call it "conversion," but the proper name for it is perversion.

Resumption of trade between Britain and Russia is hailed by a pious journal as a piece of good news. This jubilation seems rather odd, in view of the fact that the trade being resumed is between a Christian country and a militantly "Anti-God" nation. Presumably, the "other-worldly" obsession of British Christians in no wise unfits them for appreciating the material advantages accruing from trading with a nation of Atheists.

One of the things which Lord Baden-Powell has learnt in what he calls the Varsity of Life is that:—

In a difficult situation one never-failing guide is to ask yourself what Christ would have done and then do it—as nearly as you can.

One is inclined to suspect that there have been occasions in B.P.'s life when the "never-failing guide" was unavailing. For B.P. is a soldier by profession. How often, in warfare, did he "turn the other cheek" (or as nearly as he could) to the smiter or attacker? But that is what Christ would have done.

Another of B.P.'s discoveries is that "the really rich man is the man who has the fewest wants." This seems to offer as a model the human vegetable, such as a religious hermit in his cell or the least intelligent type of rustic. For our part, we are inclined to fancy that the really rich man is he who has such wants as he can satisfy with or through his own creative ability.

Councillor Ernest Marklew, who was a Labour candidate in the last election, told a gathering of Spiritualists at Doncaster, that the Church has strayed far from the path in doctrine and in practice. It has, he said, long since ceased to relate itself to the actual conditions of life. Never on the side of any great cause until it was won, it somehow has usually contrived to come in after the victory and claim credit where none was due. Furthermore, declared Mr. Marklew, it has neglected the poor and oppressed and no longer has the support of the masses. It no longer counts in the great work of social reconstruction, except as a defender of class, property, and privilege. Mr. Marklew appears to have a rather odd notion of what the Christian Church is and was. He appears to fancy that it has suddenly acquired the characteristics he deplors. Whereas, it has in most of the respects mentioned never been any different. What has happened of late years is that many thinking people are to-day able to

see the Church as it really is and always has been. And, we may add, the reason why they can see in better perspective is that their eyes have been opened by Freethought propagandists, directly or indirectly.

Catholics here in England will now have a chance of prostrating themselves and worshipping and adoring one of the largest relics of the Crown of Thorns. This marvellous relic, which is just as genuinely genuine as the other ten thousand odd similar relics will be shown by the Benedictine nuns of Stanbrook Abbey nearly every Friday during July, August, September and October of this year, which being the Holy Year, is therefore particularly favoured. What a delightful photograph could be made of our Catholic *intelligentsia*—Messrs. Belloc, Chesterton, Waugh, Knox and similar stars, all bending in sheer reverence before such a Dazzling Holy Relic! Will Catholic papers oblige?

Bishop McNulty said the other day that "when a service called the Mass was celebrated outside Catholic Orders, it was no more the Mass than the Passion Play at Oberammergau was Calvary. It looks like the Mass. It is realistic, you may say, but it is not real." This is most unkind. Anglo-Catholics claim their Mass is far more the real thing than the Roman variety which is often stigmatized as being grossly superstitious. But is it not sad to see the supporters of the same religion wrangling as to which of them can impart a Real Presence into a wafer by uttering a few magical words in Latin? The worst of it is that to a mere outsider like ourselves, the wafer remains a wafer no matter what is said or who says it—until, of course, it is eaten.

Fifty Years Ago.

INDIAN NOTES.

SPEAKING of churches, brings me to the subject of missionaries. Is it necessary to tell my Freethinking friends that here, as all over the world, the missionary is a fraud? As teachers or doctors they sometimes do good, but such cases are extremely rare. And even when such cases occur, I consider their place would be better filled by one properly trained to either profession. The ordinary representative of the dissenting sects who comes out here disgusts his logical Hindu hearers by his dogmatism, and they soon learn to pass him by without further notice than an amused smile. He comes out from the missionary manufactory stored with idiomatic and grammatical Urdu culled from "Dr Forbes' Manual," or a similar work, and finds to his dismay that in very few parts of India is he understood; indeed, he may be sent to a district where they have a patois of their own. For the languages of India are legion.

Well do I know the sight of the missionary with a small knot of natives around him: the blind semi-idiot of the neighbouring village who thinks Christianity consists in "wearing European clothes same like Sahib"; the poor sweeper, who sees elevation from his lowly caste, and a chance of repaying the cuffs and kicks he has received from his fellow-creatures when he turns Christian and lives in the mission church compound; the native policeman who loiters round (anything for a change); a few villagers attracted by the novelty, who stop to rest on their dusty tramp homeward, and—a few pariah dogs. To such an audience the "Padre sahib" shouts and gesticulates; then, when his time is up, mounts his dogcart and drives off to his pleasant bungalow; where, cooled by the punkah swinging over head, he forgets Ram Singh and Nobby Bux in the hot stifling bazaar, and longs for his month's leave to the cool hills, or for the time to come when he will take ship and go home to enjoy his retiring allowance, there to enlarge to wondering non-travellers at May meetings upon the heat and dust of India and the number of converts gained to the fold.

THE FREETHINKER

FOUNDED BY G. W. FOOTE,

EDITORIAL:

61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

Telephone No. : CENTRAL 2412.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MR. F. HILL.—Sorry you were put to such an inconvenience owing to a foolish misprint. Our best apologies. The meeting was held in Porth.

W. H. COPELAND.—We are very pleased to hear of the good work being done by the new Seaham Branch, and of the success of Mr. Brighton's lectures.

F. GATESHILL.—Next week.

FREETHINKER ENDOWMENT TRUST.—E. A. Macdonald, £2 2s.; G. E. Webb, 5s.

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

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When the services of the National Secular Society in connexion with Secular Burial Services are required, all communications should be addressed to the Secretary, R. H. Rosett, giving as long notice as possible.

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

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

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One year, 15/-; half year, 7/5; three months, 3/9.

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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.

We have been considering whether it would be good business to offer to anyone who paid a three months subscription to the *Freethinker* a cheap encyclopedia, a mangle, a dictionary, or the right to enter a competition to place the first twelve horses in the Derby for a prize of £50,000. But we are afraid that our readers are not of the mental type that buy the two million copies of the *Daily Suppress* or the *New-Crocodile*, or other members of the biggest circulation ever. So, as the *Freethinker* circulation has been entirely built up by its admirers finding new readers for us, we must content ourselves with reminding them that the holiday season offers a fine opportunity for taking an extra copy for presenting to a friend, or using their own copy when read for that purpose. Or if they will send along six halfpenny stamps we will send the paper for six weeks to any address that is given us.

We have quite a number of clergymen among our regular readers, many of whom write from time to time to tell us that, while not agreeing with our point of view, they find the paper stimulating. That, of course, is our aim, and if it helps Christians to realize that there is a point of view other than their own in the world, we shall be doing some good. But our reason for writing this note is to assure our readers that the article in this issue signed "An Impatient Parson," is really written by one of the clerical readers of the wicked *Freethinker*.

We note a very pertinent protest in the *Surrey Comet* from Mr. W. J. Pringle against the Teddington Council allowing its offices to be used as an advertising station

for an evangelical mission now being carried on in the town. Mr. Pringle pertinently asks whether an advertisement of meetings of the National Secular Society would be similarly permitted to appear. We should like to see similar protests from Freethinkers in other parts against the use of official buildings for sectarian purposes. If this were done we might soon find such favouritism stopped.

The writer in the *London Evening News*, who calls himself the "Londoner," gave an interesting account of a world-famous religious book called the *Peep of Day*. It was written by a Miss Bevan, and was one of those awful evangelistic productions which used "to be thrust upon little Victorians." It gloried in lurid pictures of the horrors of hell and was dreaded by the "Londoner" and, no doubt, youngsters like him; and he points out that even if parents thought the book was going a little too far, one's aunts would see you did not escape. But what a picture of Christian mentality does all this show! Does not the "Londoner" see that the present generation of youngsters owe their freedom from this kind of religious terror to Freethought?

The Season of Hope, by James Leatham (The Deveron Press, Turriff, Aberdeenshire) is a collection of verse gay and grave with quite a sensible, Freethought bias. For example, in *Knowing Better than Thinking*, we get:—

Man, looking on the world with wondering eyes
Devised a realm of fable all compact,
Till, tired of Explanations that were lies,
He "turned from fancy to more wondrous fact,"

affording a summary of the change from superstition to science. There is a sprinkling of Scots Verse, but the English reader will be able to enjoy these as the author has given something in the nature of a glossary. An edition, in paper covers at 1s. 6d. or in cloth 2s. 6d., supplies 120 pages of interesting matter.

The Manchester Branch is paying special attention to open-air work this season, and some good meetings have been held in Platt Fields. The speakers, Mr. J. Clayton, Mr. Sam Cohen, Mr. Sissons and others have had good-sized audiences and great interest has been shown in the lectures and in the discussions that have followed. On Sunday last an excellent address was delivered by Mr. H. Hankin, and to-day (July 16) another meeting will be held. We hope that local friends will do their best to be present and give their help in whatever direction they can. There is nothing like having a good muster of supporters on these occasions.

We again remind our readers who wish to be at the Bradlaugh Centenary Dinner at the Trocadero Restaurant on September 26, and at the Public Demonstration at the Friends House on September 23, that they should secure their tickets early if they wish to make certain of being present. The tickets for the dinner are 10s. 6d. each, and for the public meeting, sixpence and a shilling each. They may be obtained either from the *Freethinker* Office or from the Bradlaugh Centenary Committee, 38 Cursitor Street, E.C.

With reference to the Bradlaugh Centenary Fund, we are asked to announce that Manchester Freethinkers who wish to subscribe may send their subscriptions to the Branch Secretary, Mr. W. A. Atkinson, 40 Montford Street, Howard Street, Salford, Lancs.

Mr. G. Whitehead reports a series of good meetings in Liverpool, and a very promising start in Birkenhead is receiving much support from the local N.S.S. Branch in each case. From to-day (July 16) until August 11, Mr. Whitehead will be in Durham and Northumberland. In that area the N.S.S. Branches have formed themselves into a federation for co-operative work and some good results are expected from the visit which is part of Mr. Whitehead's summer tour, the expenses of which are borne by the N.S.S.

Mr. Brighton continues to send in reports of good meetings held in the Durham and Northumberland area, which also applies to Mr. J. Clayton in Lancashire. In those places there is plenty of work to keep many speakers constantly busy, and if unattached Freethinkers joined the National Secular Society it could be done.

Our readers will remember the Montreal case, in which a Bailiff of the High Courts was arrested on a charge of Blasphemy. The Blasphemy consisted in criticisms of the Roman Catholic Church, a priest of which the "blasphemer" had found misconducting himself with his wife. Despairing of gaining a verdict of guilty, the opposition, animated by the priests, secured a commitment of Gaudry to an asylum. From this he was released on a writ of *habeas corpus*, and for some time the case has dragged its weary length along. Fortunately, the defendant has been for some time at liberty. Now a cablegram reaches us from Montreal that Judge Archambault, a Roman Catholic, has again ordered the re-arrest of Mr. Gaudry. Christianity seems to be a very real thing in Montreal. We are expecting further information by letter.

Wisdom from the East.

"I think it was Jekyll who used to say that the further he went west, the more convinced he felt that the wise men came from the East."—*Sydney Smith*.

I AM moved in this discursion by a glance at the philosophy of the Chinese sage, Chuang Tzu, who contemned man as a sentient being some three centuries before the Christian era. His philosophy merits consideration, and should be taken into account not only by our pundits, but also by those of our politicians who have the faculty of clear thinking.

Democracy has been defined as government of the gullible many by the incompetent few; the cynical subject of this discourse had formed a similar opinion some two thousand years ago. He even went further, and anticipated the modern political conception of work by remarking, "Do nothing and everything will be done," words of wisdom appreciated by the enfranchised and enlightened multitude of this realm. "The perfect man ignores self, the true sage ignores reputation, the divine man ignores action," from which apothegms it will be apparent to the observant that we are to-day governed by divine men. Perfect men and true sages do not exist in public life nowadays in this imperfect world, but it is to be noted that the learned and reflective Chuang Tzu had not anticipated the advantages of modern civilization, otherwise he would have modified his counsels of perfection. Nevertheless, the moralizings of this mordant philosopher from the East contain some of the most caustic criticisms of his own civilization that have been handed down to us from the ages of antiquity.

Chuang Tzu spent his life in proclaiming the great principle of inaction, and in pointing out the utter futility of all useful things. "Do nothing and everything will be done," was the doctrine which he inherited from his master, Lao Tzu, the founder of philosophical Taoism three hundred years previously, whose aim in life was to translate action into thought and thought into inaction, which eventually brought him to a state of contemplative inertia. All of which reads like profound nonsense, but hear the sage's views on subjects which are freely debated to-day. Chuang Tzu proclaimed "To try to make other people good is as futile as beating a drum in a forest in order to find a fugitive, which is waste of energy." And also, "There is such a thing as leaving people alone: there has never been such a thing as governing mankind." Further, "All methods of government are wrong: they are unscientific because they seek to

alter the natural environment of man: they are ignorant because they try to spread education, and they are immoral because by interfering with the individual they produce the most aggressive egotism."

The economic question is touched upon by this wise man from the East, and he contemns capitalism with the ardour of Karl Marx. The accumulation of wealth is to him the source and origin of all evil; it makes the strong violent, and the weak dishonest. It creates the petty pilferer and places him in a bamboo cage for punishment, and it evolves the dishonest financier and places him on a throne of jade. Wealth is the father of competition, and competition is the destruction and waste of energy. The law of nature in its natural sequence is rest, repetition and peace. War and weariness are the result of an artificial state of society based upon the accumulation of wealth, and the wealthier this Society becomes, the more thoroughly bankrupt it really is, for it has not sufficient rewards for the good, nor sufficient punishments for the evil.

Chuang Tzu endeavoured to reconcile the identity of contraries, and like Plato he was an idealist; Hegel must have derived his abstract and profound philosophy from him, for his remark, "One man has understood me, and even he has not," is pure Taoism, and the First Principles of Herbert Spencer owe something to the metaphysics of Chuang Tzu. The self-conscious man he regarded with compassion as one who was ever striving to be somebody else, and so renounces the only possible excuse for his own existence.

These cynical reflections seem to indicate the prophetic spirit: "The prizes of this world degrade a man as much as the world's punishments. The age is rotten with the worship of success, and as for education, true wisdom can neither be learnt nor yet taught; it is a spiritual state to which he who lives in harmony with nature attains. Knowledge is shallow if we compare it with the extent of the unknown, and only the unknowable is of value. Society produces rogues and education makes one rogue cleverer than another. Of what possible philosophic importance can education be when it simply serves the purpose of making each man differ from his neighbour? We ultimately arrive at a chaos of opinions, doubt everything, and fall into the vulgar habit of argument. Look at Hui Tzu. He was a man of many ideas, all unsound. His words would fill five carts, but his doctrines were paradoxical and perverse. He stated that there were feathers in an egg because there were feathers on a chicken: that a dog could be a sheep because all names were arbitrary, and that a horse and a cow were three, because taken separately they were one, and taken together they were two, and one and two make three. Hui Tzu was like a man running a race with his own shadow, or making a noise, in order to smother the echo. He was a clever gadfly, that was all. What was the use of him?"

This eastern sophist continues his moralizing thus: "Morality went out of fashion when people began to moralize. Men then ceased to be spontaneous and became priggish and artificial, and were so blind that they had a definite purpose in life. Then came governments and philanthropists, the two curses of the age. The former tried to coerce people into being good and so destroyed the natural goodness inherent in man; the latter were a set of importunate meddlers who created confusion wherever they went. They were stupid enough to have principles and unfortunate enough to act up to them: they all came to bad ends, and so proved that universal altruism is as bad in its results as universal egotism. They tripped up over charity and fettered themselves with duties to their neighbours."

It is not encouraging in this age of smug self-righteousness to be told by ancient Chinese wisdom that it is immoral to be consciously good, and that to do anything is the worst form of idleness. The derivative philosophy of Chuang Tzu, which advocates that nobody should be allowed to meddle in affairs that are not their concern, would, if practised nowadays, relieve mankind from the intolerable burden of innumerable flag days, and put a period to the organized medicancy with which we are overwhelmed. The doctrine of the uselessness of all useful things would shock the apostles of progress who dwell among us, and what would become of those slaves of their tongues, the politicians, if we adopted that precept of Chuang Tzu which states that there is no such thing as governing mankind? Pious people filled with an urge for good works would be disturbed by these precious words: "Mosquitos will keep a man awake all night with their biting, and just in the same way this talk of charity and duty to one's neighbour drives us nearly mad. Sirs, strive to keep the world to its own original simplicity, and as the wind bloweth where it listeth, so let virtue establish itself. Wherefore this undue energy?"

It is certain that Samuel Butler was influenced by the philosophy of Chuang Tzu in his conception of Erewhon, for in the Colleges of Unreason that philosophy was expounded. When the professors at one of those seats of unlearning were informed of Homer's noble line to the effect that a man should ever strive to be foremost, and in all things to outvie his peers, they remarked scornfully that it was no wonder that countries acting upon such a detestable maxim should be forever flying at each other's throats. "Why," asked one professor, "should a man want to be better than his neighbours? Let him be thankful he is no worse." Life, they contended, would be intolerable if men were to be guided by reason alone. There are no follies and no unreasonableness so great as those which can be apparently defended by reason itself, and there is hardly an error into which men may not be easily led if they base their conduct on reason alone. People, they say, have such a strong, natural bias towards reason that they will seek it for themselves and act upon it quite as much as, or more than, is good for them; there is no need to encourage reason. With unreason the case is different: it is the natural complement of reason, without whose existence reason itself would be non-existent. If then, they argue, reason would be non-existent were there no such thing as unreason, surely it follows that the more unreason there is, the more reason there must be also? Hence the necessity for the development of unreason, even in the interests of reason itself. Unreason is a part of reason itself: it must therefore be allowed its full share in stating the conditions.

In a similar manner, these Erewhonian professors follow Chuang Tzu into the realms of genius, of which they take no account, for they say that everybody is a genius more or less. No one is so physically sound that no part of him will be even a little unsound, and no one is so diseased but that some part of him will be healthy—so no man is so mentally and morally sound, but that he will be in part both mad and wicked; and no man is so mad and wicked but he will be sensible and honourable in part. In like manner there is no genius who is not also a fool, and no fool who is not also a genius.

In regard to taking thought, they contend, in these Colleges of Unreason, that it is not their business to help students to think for themselves. "Surely," they say, "this is one of the last things which one who wishes them well should encourage them to do. It is our aim to ensure that they think as we do, or at any

rate, as we hold it expedient to say we do." As to progress, their views were similar to those enunciated by the Chinese sage. "We object to progress," affirmed one professor; another remarked, "If a man gets to know more than his neighbours, he should keep his knowledge to himself till he has sounded them and seen whether they agree, or are likely to agree with him. If a man can carry his neighbours with him, he may say what he likes; but if not, what insult can be more gratuitous than the telling them what they do not want to know? A man should always bear in mind that intellectual over-indulgence is one of the most insidious and disgraceful forms that excess can take. Granted that everyone should succeed more or less, inasmuch as absolutely perfect sanity would drive any man mad the moment he reached it." All of which is derived from the precepts of Chuang Tzu, which state that energy is the worst form of idleness, and universal altruism is as bad in its results as universal egotism.

This brief excursion into the realm of Chinese metaphysics and Erewhonian philosophy compels the thought that if the doctrines were widely known, our national habits of hypocrisy and self-righteousness would receive a severe rebuff, and patriotism would expire for lack of nourishment. Those who reflect upon the common curse of mankind, folly and ignorance, may derive consolation and amusement in discussing this fascinating philosophy, but in a world governed by misrule and the dictates of Plutus, it would be unwise and unkind to broadcast the precepts and teachings of Chuang Tzu. The vast multitude of the simple and the credulous are not yet ready for those teachings.

F. G. COOPER.

The "Blasphemous Teaching" Bill.

THE Bill to which the Commons recently gave a Second reading has a long title: "A Bill to prevent the teaching of seditious and blasphemous doctrines and methods to children; and for other purposes connected therewith."

In the present Parliament anything, particularly anything foolish, may happen. The Prayer for the High Court of Parliament prescribed by the Prayer Book distinctly encourages Christian hope that the Almighty will specially help a measure so clearly striving after "the advancement of Thy Glory, the Good of Thy Church" . . . so that "Religion and Piety may be established among us for all generations."

A more Christian proposition, using the word "Christian" in its common and worse sense, has seldom been submitted to Parliament.

The use of the term "seditious" is a disgraceful piece of hypocrisy. The measure may be inspired by a desire to please the enemies of Communism, but a careful examination of the text shows clearly that the Bill aims primarily at the "blasphemer." Sedition is not defined, and, except for purposes of prejudice, the word might as well have been omitted. Sedition is as relevant in this connexion as if a Bill had proposed to penalize equally and simultaneously Bigamy and Sunday Haircutting.

Incidentally it might easily happen that Labour Propaganda amongst children, not indictable under the present law, might, if this Bill becomes law, be construed as criminal. We have all heard (and some of us have used) "ribald language" in telling slum children why they live in overcrowded tenements.

The Bill applies to "any person other than the parent," and thus somewhat illogically, permits parents to teach Sedition and Blasphemy. True, the Bill says "The" parent, and Judges may conceivably interpret this word as implying that the law allows a person to teach sedition and blasphemy to his own legitimate offspring. It is not so stated. Foster parents and guardians obviously must be permitted to do all the things "the parent" may do

A third party could presumably teach children sedition and blasphemy, if acting under a Power of Attorney given them by "the parent." Many other people act temporarily *in loco parentis*, and it may prove amusing to see if they too will be permitted to teach these "forbidden" gospels.

All Priests are "Fathers," but as they are never Parents, it would seem they will not be allowed to teach children sedition and blasphemy. The Catholic Schools may not teach such seditious doctrines as that Catholics owe primarily allegiance to the Pope, before King George. At least they must not teach this in an offensive sort of way. Also they will have to modify their references to the religion of Bishop Barnes, and restrain their often very ribald (and even disgusting) allusions to the religion of those who find divorce, birth control and even abortion compatible with the Thirty-nine Articles.

The Police will need divine guidance or occult thought-reading to carry out the provision that a crime is committed if anyone but "the" parent has in his possession seditious or blasphemous works (perfectly legal in other respects) if such works are intended to be used for teaching children. The Pioneer Press, or Messrs. Watts, may possess many copies of, say, Ingersoll's Lectures. Long arguments may arise as to whether these firms INTENDED the Lectures to be used:—

- (a) For the parent to give or read to his child.
 - (b) For adults or youngsters over sixteen years old.
 - (c) For children of fifteen years and eleven months old.
 - (d) For sale or distribution in the ordinary way.
- (a) and (b) will be permissible. (c) will be criminal. (d) God only knows.

The definition of Blasphemy is new and interesting. For the first time in England it is to be a crime to seek "to bring the Christian OR ANY OTHER form of Religion into contempt." On a famous occasion (the trial of G. W. Foote), Lord Coleridge threw overboard the old pretence which many great judges have believed in, that Christianity was part and parcel of the law of England. Now it would appear, Thuggery, Sun-dancing, Kuksumism, and Jimsonweedism, are also part and parcel of English law.

Four months imprisonment in addition to a big fine may be inflicted on those who "by means of ribald, contumelious or scurrilous language" dare to say in suitable words what most people think about these and other religions.

We may, however, safely calculate that no British jury would ever regard as a Religion a creed which only black or yellow races believe in. It presents an incredible picture to imagine an Old Bailey trial of a British clergyman charged with using offensive expressions about Kaffir or Fanti ritual and belief. In the long run the new law would be interpreted as applying solely to Christianity, and having no concern with "superstitions"; a "superstition" being obviously a religion which is not the religion of the judge or jury.

A word about "contumacy." We need waste no time over the other two adjectives used, namely "ribald" and "scurrilous." They are merely labels for something the offended person dislikes applied to something he agrees with. The word "contumelious" has a ghastly history. It means stubborn disobedience, persistence in principles we do not share. It implies that unreasonable dogmatists are annoyed because their arguments are unconvincing. It has always been a favourite word with Inquisitors, torturers, and bullies-in-office. At its best, it means that people are to be regarded as criminal in exact proportion to the tenacity with which they hold to principle. They are wicked if their opinions survive a preliminary threat of forcible suppression.

A glance at the list of the eight "backers" of this preposterous proposal reveals that all eight are Conservatives, that they are all elderly persons (one of them is turned seventy-five, and none is under sixty), and that there are no Roman Catholics although three of them are Irishmen.

The Army, Navy, Air Service, Civil and Indian Services are all represented, while the list of their titles and decorations would occupy considerable space in the

Freethinker. Sir Alfred Knox, for example, is credited with Army honours bestowed upon him by five different Governments. The other allied Governments seem to have been strangely ungrateful for services which must have equally benefited all who fought on the victorious side in the war.

The husband of the Duchess of Atholl is richly endowed with peerages. These occupy eleven columns of small print in Burke's *Peerage*. He could form a House of Lords all by himself. He possesses nineteen full and complete peerages by right of succession, and it is very condescending of the Duchess to be only one member of the Lower House. Her wee membership is like the "little ewe lamb" in Nathan's parable.

Some of the backers are authors, and although most of their immortal works are on the heavy side (*Machine Gun Tactics, With the Russian Army*, etc.), occasionally one of these veterans lapses into what his fellow-backers may regard as blasphemy. Rear-Admiral Sueter is said to have written a work called *Airmen or Noahs*.

The Irish Protestants will naturally move Amendments to the Bill, exempting from its operation all Orange propaganda. Children must still be taught to celebrate the Battle of the Boyne, to throw stones at Catholic processions, and to repeat, "To Hell with the Pope." In any case it is stated that "this Act shall not apply to Northern Ireland."

If there are any sane Christian M.P.'s, they will move to exempt all quotations from the Bible, some of which are very "seditious, blasphemous, ribald, scurrilous," and evendistastfully obscene. May we not expect a "liberal" amendment to prevent this enactment being used to stifle broad-church criticisms of those parts of the Bible which advanced Christians nowadays admit were rightly denounced a century ago by Freethinkers as barbarous, untrue and contradictory to known facts.

But when Roman Catholics begin to prosecute Bishop Barnes for expressing his and our opinion of the absurdities of transubstantiation the Protestant backers of this Bill will wake up. And we shall see, in the Amendments proposed, how eagerly the Jews, and various sections of the religious world will seek to protect their own "religious rights," that there will be no Bill left to go to Third Reading. It would not be surprising to see the Bill "simplified" out of existence, or made a straightforward "Anti-Atheist" proposal in the end.

In any case Freethinkers do not fear it. Christian bigotry always goes as far as it can. Another blasphemy law would make no difference. We shall continue to teach adults and young alike that Christianity (the religion we know most about) is a fraud, a curse and an enemy to civilization.

GEORGE BEDBOROUGH.

"Showers of Blessings."

WHAT the Press were pleased to describe an "interesting ceremony" has recently been revived by certain Northern clergymen. Rogation Sunday has been duly observed after a lapse of quite a long period. In two places this important service has been performed, not, however, as an "interesting ceremony" so much as vitally essential if success is to be achieved.

In North Shields, the nets of the fishing fleet were duly blessed in the presence of a large congregation. Clad in special, but more or less, "fitting" garments, the clergy solemnly invoked God's favour on the nets. How the favour is to be bestowed was not mentioned. Whether the desired result is bigger, better, or just more fish we were not told. There is just one fly in the ointment however. In the neighbouring fishing towns, the nets have not been blessed. This may be decidedly awkward for the fish. Of course God will have made some arrangement with the fish, for the whole thing depends on them, and we must remember God has a wonderful way with fish. For instance, we remember the success he had when arranging for Jonah's holiday, and later when a fish acted as treasurer for the Lord. The only thing that worries me is, how are the fish to distinguish between the blessed, and unblessed nets, in the absence of some distinguishing mark? I picture a

herring, in an effort to prove its loyalty to its creator, swimming up to the nets and failing to see any difference between those blessed and unblessed, saying, "I'm blessed if I know which of these blessed nets is blessed."

But of one thing I am sure, the result of the whole affair will be a nett profit for the clergyman. A few miles away the clergy were blessing the growing crops, in order to ensure a good harvest, and thus justifying the holding of a harvest festival later on in the year. If these efforts bear fruit, we may get some interesting developments.

If it is possible to bless fields, why not an allotment, or small garden, or indeed why not a single plant?

This ought to interest intending exhibitors at the autumn flower and vegetable shows.

With a few blessings an exhibitor may easily win any or all the best of the prizes.

Then we can expect the successful "blesser" to expect recognition, in which case, with a view to adding to his list of clients, he might demand a card being attached to winning exhibits.

We may yet see exhibits labelled: Blessed by Rev. John Beanstalk, Father Green Turniptop, or Captain A. Onion. Then why not all trades follow suit? Newspapers and their owners might profit by having their printing machinery or staffs blessed.

Miners might produce cheaper coal, if the picks and shovels were regularly blessed.

There is no end to the possibilities; road menders' pneumatic drills, conductors' ticket punches, and even the indicators on taxis which denote the amount to pay, might work much more effectively with a blessing or two.

The only drawback to us having wholesale blessings, is the increased difficulty we should experience when we tried to count our many blessings.

JOHN T. BRIGHTON.

The Modern Poets and Religion.

THAT the light of pure reason is a bad thing for art seems to be a very widespread idea, though it is difficult to believe that muddle-headed emotion could ever take the place of reason in any sphere. It is difficult, too, to reconcile this idea with the fact that the greatest age of art, as far as we know, was the age of Ancient Greece—which was also the age when human reason was recognized as being the most dependable thing on earth.

But the poets have also been pressed into the service of the most muddle-headed set of emotions—those which give rise to religious yearnings and religious inhibitions, and this despite the examples of Shelley and James Thomson, and others that could be mentioned—philosophic Atheists who are at the same time poets of the front rank.

The poets of to-day, however, have no such strong religious influences as those of the past. Even Mr. T. S. Eliot, who has, in "The Criterion," set up a standard of criticism and of philosophic thought which accepts some kind of religion (although a fairly nebulous one at times), in his creative work as a poet has broken right away from these standards.

Read these verses, for instance, from a characteristic poem called "The Hippopotamus":—

"I saw the 'potamus take wing
Ascending from the damp savannas,
And quiring angels round him sing
The praise of God in loud hosannas.

Blood of the Lamb shall wash him clean
And him shall heavenly arms enfold,
Among the saints he shall be seen
Performing on a harp of gold.

He shall be washed as white as snow,
By all the martyr'd virgins kist,
While the True Church remains below
Wrapt in the old miasmal mist."

It seems fairly certain that Mr. Eliot's respectable public lines of "The Criterion" would not appreciate those

But it is not until we turn to the youngest generation of poets that we find this disgust with the church and all her utilities most strongly expressed. Mr. W. H. Auden is one of the leaders of this revolt against tradition, and here are a couple of verses from a poem of his, entitled, simply, "Song":—

"I'll attend when the parson is preaching
I'll tell all my sins to the priest
I'll do exactly as they ask
I'll go to heaven at least
After this world has had its day.

You may sit down under the pulpit
You may go down on your knees
But you don't believe them any more
And they won't give you ease
They're of this world that has had its day."

Barring a certain lack of punctuation there are not many of the readers of this paper who would not agree whole-heartedly with that view.

It is quite certain that if to-day another *City of Dreadful Night* should make its appearance it would not be as heartily "cold-shouldered" as was Thomson's great work. We have certainly progressed, when, in this year of grace, Mr. Humbert Wolfe, who is considered as a member of the "right wing" of poets, can say:—

"If there were God (as God may be)."

Men have been imprisoned for less in past ages. So it seems time for people generally to realize that art cannot flourish until reason is free. A healthy state of affairs is that in which every man's mind is free from harmful superstitions—but, unfortunately, we are a very long way from that yet. Let us be thankful, however, that those masters of humanity, the great artists, whether of words, of music (think of Granville Bantock) or of painting (think of John Collier and the rest) are freeing themselves from degrading superstition, and so making themselves fit to usher in that age of reason which is surely coming before many years are past.

JOHN ROWLAND.

Church Papers Denounce Church Scandal.

THE Sydney Diocesan Synod (Sydney, N.S.W., Australia) recently had to appoint an archbishop, due to the death of the previous occupant of the position, Dr. Wright. Reference is made to the appointment in the May issue of *The Pioneer*, the official clerically-conducted organ of the Sydney Unitarian Church. Among other things, the writer in that paper says that "there seems some kind of difficulty in the way of Dr. Mowl, who received the appointment, coming to Sydney," adding:

"One newspaper said that the methods and intrigues employed by the clergy and laity in the election were of such a nature that Dr. Mowl preferred to stay in China rather than come to Australia. The plots and the plans employed appear to have been most discreditable. A leading Anglican and well-known citizen of Sydney has remarked that, if such things had been done on a racecourse, disqualification would have followed."

I have given this extract from a clerical paper, with a view to illustrating the extent of the scandal surrounding the appointment, for it is clear that it must have been of a particularly glaring character to have compelled recognition in such a quarter.

But even worse—so far as regards those responsible for the appointment—has yet to come. *The Church Standard*, published in Sydney, is—if not the official, at least the recognized—organ of the Anglican Church. Listen, then, to what is said editorially at the time the ballot was being taken:—

"Every code of etiquette, except that of the racecourse or of N.S.W. politics, has been violated. All decency and dignity have been thrown to the winds. The whole affair is a tragedy which will have far-reaching effects. We do not envy the new prelate the task which lies

ahead of him, and which is not made any easier by the disgraceful atmosphere which is surrounding his election."

The proceedings, of course, had a serviceable side in revealing to the public those who constituted the Synod as hypocrites of the first magnitude. They began with a prolonged prayer that they might be guided and blessed in all they did. Yet, secretly, they were planning—scheming and contriving—and now, with the exposures to which they have been subjected, the public must be fully apprised of the fact that never for a moment did their souls rise beyond their own sordid, self-seeking ends.

Truly it is by such exhibitions as this that the church is, unconsciously, aiding in the good work of hastening its own end!

Sydney, N.S.W., Australia.

FRANK HILL.

Correspondence.

MOB LAW.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Your article "Mob Law," in the *Freethinker* of May 21, would occupy the front page of the most widely read paper in a really civilized country! It is gravely insistent and most timely.

Here in South Africa the same insidious encroachment on the liberty of the subject is taking place. All Russian periodicals are banned by our Government on the plea of protecting the native from "subversive propaganda!" This principle is dangerous and can easily be extended by a tyrannous parliamentary majority to all forms of teaching from which they dissent. We now have in power here a "Coalition," equivalent to your "National" Government. Parliamentary oppositions dwindle to the point of disappearance, and the voice of healthy criticism is stilled in the name of a false and hollow patriotism. Thousands of young people brutalized by the hopeless economic conditions prevailing willingly offer themselves to would-be dictators to force such Governments along the path of the destruction of liberty. Using the prejudice against Communism (*I am not a Communist*), a prejudice which has been sedulously cultivated in the minds of the young for the last fifteen years, all advanced movements are unscrupulously labelled by interested parties with the dread ticket—the mob does the rest!

We all like to feel, particularly as we grow older, that the world is a little saner for our thinking, a little better for our doing, I speak of the "socially-minded," where most Freethinkers belong. We read and we reflect in the sanctuary of our homes and are grateful for living now instead of in the bad old days of the thumbscrew and the rack, days which we flatter ourselves can never return. But as you say, "one never knows!" Events in Germany should be a warning to luke-warm Freethinkers. If they neglect to protest by word and deed and with all the vehemence of their being against the opening of the gates to the barbarian, they will deservedly go down in the common ruin. Never has the occasion for organization and firm action been more urgent. Failure means resigning ourselves to the triumph of the slave state, and the probable eclipse of culture in the western world for generations.

ERIC A. McDONALD.

Johannesburg, June 6.

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INDOOR.

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

OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N.S.S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand): 3.15, Sunday, July 16, Mr. R. H. Rosetti. Outside "Salmon and Bull," Cambridge Road, E.2, 8.0, Thursday, July 20, Mr. Paul Goldman.

FULHAM AND CHELSEA BRANCH N.S.S. (Shorrolds Road, North End Road): 7.30, Saturday, July 15, Messrs. F. Barnes, W. E. Bryant and C. Tuson. *Freethinkers* on sale.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (White Stone Pond, Hampstead): 11.30, Sunday, July 16, Mr. B. A. Le Maine. Highbury Corner, 8.0, Sunday, July 16, Mr. C. Tuson. South Hill Park, Hampstead, 8.0, Monday, July 17, Mr. L. Ebury. Highbury Corner, 8.0, Thursday, July 20, Mr. C. Tuson.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Brockwell Park): 7.0, Sunday, July 16, Mr. L. Ebury. Cock Pond, Clapham Old Town, Wednesday, July 19, Mr. C. Tuson. Alwell Road, Clapham Junction, Friday, July 21, F. P. Corrigan.

THE METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (Regents Park): 3.0 and 6.30.

WEST HAM BRANCH N.S.S. (Outside Technical College, Stratford, E.): 7.0, Mr. LeMaine.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 12.0, B. A. Le Maine. 3.30, E. Bryant and C. Tuson. 6.30, A. H. Hyatt, E. C. Wood, C. Tuson, B. A. Le Maine and E. Bryant. Wednesday, 7.30, W. P. Campbell-Everden. Thursdays, 7.30, B. A. Le Maine and C. Tuson. Fridays, E. Bryant and B. A. Le Maine.

WOOLWICH (Beresford Square): 8.0, Sunday, July 16, S. Burke—"The Believers Amazing Credulity." "The Ship," Plumstead Common, 8.0, Wednesday, July 19, F. P. Corrigan. "The Ship," Plumstead Common, 8.0, Friday, July 21, F. W. Smith and S. Burke.

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

NEWCASTLE BRANCH N.S.S. (Arcade, Pilgrim Street): 3.0, Members' Meeting. Business: Mr. Whitehead's Visit. Bigg Market, 7.30, Mr. A. Flanders. Literature on sale.

OUTDOOR.

BRIGHTON BRANCH N.S.S. (The Level): 7.30, Tuesday, July 18, Mr. De Lacey. A Lecture.

BURNLEY MARKET, 8.0, Sunday, July 16, Mr. J. Clayton. DERBY (Market Square): 7.0, Debate—"Is There a God?" Mr. A. Salem, B.A. (London Mosque) and Mr. H. V. Blackman, B.Sc. Literature and current copies of *Freethinker* on sale.

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY (West Regent Street): 8.0, Friday, 14, Saturday 15, and Sunday, July 16, Mrs. Whitefield. Messrs. Buntin, Moore and White. *Freethinker* and Free-thought literature on sale at all meetings.

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N.S.S. (Queen's Drive opposite Walton Baths): 8.0, Sunday, July 16, C. McKelvie and J. V. Short. Grierson Street, 8.0, Monday, July 17, H. Little and D. Robinson. Corner of High Park Street and Park Road, 8.0, A. Jackson and E. S. Wollen.

NEWBRIGHTON, 7.0, Sunday, July 16, Mr. J. T. Brighton. NEWCASTLE (Bigg Market): 7.30, Friday, July 21, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

NORTH SHIELDS (Harbour View): Wednesday, July 18, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

QUAKER BRIDGE, 3.0, Sunday, July 16, Mr. J. Clayton. SEAHAM HARBOUR (Church Street): 8.0, Saturday, July 15, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

TRAWDEN, 7.45, Friday, July 13, Mr. J. Clayton. WORSTHORNE, 7.45, Monday, July 17, Mr. J. Clayton.

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