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

Views and Opinions

Lying for God

I DO not believe that this world is a dull world, nor do I believe that fiction is stranger or less picturesque than truth. But if I believed either statement, or both, it might furnish me with a ready explanation of the persistency of the religious lie. There is an element of persistency about all lies, but the religious lie comes as near achieving immortality as does anything I know. This is not because the religious lie—such as the detailed descriptions of answers to prayer, the tales of death-bed conversions, etc.—is a miracle of art, or a striking illustration of picturesque narration. It is not. Most religious lies are clumsier than are ordinary lies, and they are less convincingly told. Indeed, I would undertake to tell a better lie, if called upon to do so, than any that is told by the average religious liar. And tried by any standard of taste or probability I would undertake to convince a committee of experts—composed, say, in equal numbers of journalists, cabinet ministers and bishops, that my lie was a better lie than the one that is told by the professional religionist. And yet, note the fate of the two lies. I should probably have to fight hard for mine to gain acceptance, and would have to rest content with a disciple here and there; while the religious liar would find his tale accepted without any great difficulty, and would have hosts of supporters directly his lie was told. My lie would soon be buried and forgotten; *his* lie would roll on from year to year, perhaps from generation to generation, and the scorn of thousands would be poured upon anyone who set out to expose its true nature.

* * *

God and Missionaries

I have been led to reflect again on the persistency of the religious lie, as a consequence of reading an article in the *News-Chronicle* by the religious editor, Mr. Hugh Redwood. Mr. Redwood asks in the heading to his article, "Do you believe in Prayer?" and his effort is to prove that if you don't, you ought to. Evidently depending upon a certain type of

reader, and not caring a brass button about other classes, Mr. Redwood gives extracts from letters he has received, which are identical, in form and general matter, with similar answers that one can pick up at any time from evangelistic literature, or hear from a certain type of preacher. The examples in this instance are all taken from Missions that depend upon prayer for their maintenance, and God never lets them down. He may decline to send rain, but, apparently, God never lets down a Mission. And in all trustfulness Mr. Redwood publishes a number of examples—all from Missions—which he believes will prove his case. Thus there is a Missionary Training College in Upper Norwood. It needed food, and could not buy milk or bread. It owed three months rates, and had no wherewithal to pay. It also needed £8. Did the Mission ask mere men and women for money? Not a bit of it. The College believed its needs would be "met by God," and it cancelled its orders for bread and milk. But the next morning

By nine-thirty a baker seven miles away, and who was unknown to us, phoned to say that he had 92 large loaves made in error—could we use them? The evening post brought in £8, within threepence (Perhaps the Lord had deducted the 3d. for postage.) The next morning the first cheque of £25 received for three months met the rates.

There is a Bible School and Missionary Association at Hampstead which, likewise, never asks anyone but God for money. It says to God, in effect, "This place is run for you, it was built for you, and we leave it to you to look after it." And God never lets them down. A very "notable instance" is given. The Association had arranged to buy a building for £1,700. It paid a deposit of £200, and left God to find the rest of the money. The days passed, but the money did not arrive. At last, as the head of the Mission was going to bed, on the night before the money was due, he saw an envelope on the mat. The envelope contained notes for £1,000. The whole responsibility for the money had been "completely committed to God." But there was still £500 wanting. Either God had failed them or it had been "pinched" by an angel who did up the packet. With faith undiminished Mr. Carter, the missionary, went to the solicitor's office—minus the £500. Then, while in the solicitor's office, with the whole transaction about to collapse, the balance of £500 came to hand—from God. Could anything be more dramatic? If God had sent the money when it was first required, all the advertising value of the gift would have been destroyed. But he waited until the very last moment, like the film hero who waits until the last second before he saves the heroine, God held back until he could get the most out of the situation. I do not know which to admire most, the trustfulness of Mr. Carter, the confidence of Mr. Redwood in the value of prayer, or the keen Barnum-

like sense of the value of advertising shown by God Almighty. And it is to be noted that God interferes in this prompt way only where money is concerned. Truly, a Christian deity.

* * *

The Lie of Prayer

Now I call this kind of thing the "lie of prayer," because in intent it is a lie and nothing else. The essence of a lie is deception, and this series of stories are riddled through and through with deception. It is a game that has been worked in this country ever since Muller of Bristol discovered that the cheapest and best form of advertising was to let it be known as widely as possible that he would ask for money for his institution from no one but God. Other religious leaders, quick to sense the business side of the move followed his example. And, of course, the money came in. They all advertised that although they needed so much for food, so much for rent, and so much for general maintenance, they would not ask anyone for it. They would leave it to God. And they printed and circulated balance sheets and annual reports in which they again proclaimed that all this was done without asking anyone for money—except God. Quite recently some of my friends were urging me to make a general appeal for funds so as to bring the capital of the *Freethinker* Endowment Trust up to £10,000, and so avoid further loss. I declined for the moment, as I did not think the occasion favourable. But I verily believe that if I were to write an article in the form of a prayer, in which I told the Lord that unless a couple of thousand were received within the next three months, the *Freethinker* would collapse, and that I would not ask anyone for it, but that the matter was "completely committed to God,"—I believe the money would come, and I might be able to announce that thanks to my prayer being answered, the Lord had provided.

But I suggest that Mr. Redwood might cease "kidding" his readers and try a simple experiment. Let him start a mission, saying nothing to anyone. Let him go on as though he had no wants, financial or otherwise. Then let him pray, as Jesus said, in secrecy. If possible, let him keep his address unknown. This would present no difficulty to God, for if he knows the very hairs on Mr. Redwood's head, he ought to know the address at which the owner of the hairs lives. Let him do all these things, and then see how much he will get. At the end of a given time he might publish his receipts in the *News-Chronicle*. It would not take up much space.

* * *

Folly and Fraud

If there were not plenty of evidence to the contrary one would think it impossible that the readers of a daily paper could be as stupid as Mr. Redwood evidently believes them to be. Perhaps that is not putting the matter fairly; for the people who would swallow the unutterable stupidity and obvious falsity of Mr. Redwood's examples, in relation to religion, would not be deceived in that way if the attempt to trade on their credulity was in connexion with non-religious subjects. But where religion is concerned the critical powers of multitudes appears to be in a state of suspension. It is not merely in the direction of such obvious falsities as the statement that these missionaries depend upon prayer—as though there were any difference between publicly asking for money and publicly stating that they would not ask for it, but depended upon God to send it! It is seen in connexion with many other religious yarns. To take but one more example. There are very few people who have not stood by the death-bed of a friend or relative. And the exceptions are very few in

which death comes as anything but a dropping to sleep. But the century-old story of the man who was not remarkable for his religion, dying and calling to God to forgive, and Jesus to save him is accepted without question.

When Upton Sinclair was in England, he was asked by a friend, whether he considered there was more "graft" in the United States than in this country? He replied that the distinction as he saw it was that in this country the "graft" was legalized and incarnate in institutions, and while this form of graft may be less objectionable to the individual, I fancy that the reply was not very wide of the truth. At any rate, I do believe that this explains the safety of the religious liar. The religious lie has been regularized and institutionalized. There are books which supply the "experiences" that the preacher gives from the pulpit, with anecdotes of the painful end of unbelievers, and which also supply answers to prayers. That is one reason why these stories vary so little in form, and are so seldom questioned. Long usage has developed a set reaction to them, and the preacher who tells them, or the religious writer who prints them, knows that while he must go with a certain caution if he is dealing with anything else, when he is talking about religion, those for whose benefit he is speaking will seldom criticize. The lie of religion is not as old as religion, but it is tolerably safe to prophecy that it will flourish as long as religion lives.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

The Real Robert Burns

"Proud and fiery and swift and bold—
Wine of life from heart of gold,
The blood of his heathen manhood rolled
Full-billowed through his veins."—James Thomson.

ROBERT BURNS has been dead over a century, and his fame is far wider and more secure than when he died. His life is now celebrated as an important event, and his poetry rightly regarded as a glorious contribution to the world's literature. Admittedly Scotland's greatest poet, he has been subjected to extreme, even fulsome, adulation from his fellow-countrymen. Had he been a lesser genius than he was, this exaggerated praise would have exposed his name to derision.

What North-Country critics cannot be forced to perceive is that Burns was actually more than a Scottish singer. He was a British poet. His genius was such that it made him the poet of a nation whose capital was not Edinburgh, but London. This is a direct contradiction to those critics who declare that Burns depends absolutely upon dialect, and that when he tried to write the English language he fell into mediocrity, fettered by the difficulties of an alien tongue.

This time-honoured contention is part only of the truth, and shows that Burns, like many another classic, is more talked of than read. One or two brief quotations, taken at random from his works, will help to modify this idea effectually. Take this from a Battle-hymn, one of the best ever written:—

"By Oppressions woes and pains
By your sons in servile chains,
We will drain our dearest veins,
But they shall be free.
Lay the proud usurper low!
Tyrants fall in every foe!
Liberty's in every blow!
Let us do or die."

Take the poet in quite another vein:—

"O my luv'e's like a red, red rose
That's newly sprung in June!
O my luv'e's like the melodie
That's sweetly played in tune."

How much do these two striking quotations depend on dialect? Then turn to those lines which are admitted to be among the very finest that even Burns ever wrote:—

"Had we never lov'd sae kindly,
Had we never lov'd sae blindly,
Never met—or never parted—
We had ne'er been broken-hearted."

Do those superb lines derive their admitted force from their one solitary word of dialect? Admittedly, Burns triumphed in the vernacular, but it can be seen that the English language was no barrier to his genius. So many Scotsmen know so little of the real Robert Burns. They adore a purely legendary figure, the creation of several generations of hysterical image-worship. The actual man would shock the half-educated Members of Parliament, sheriffs, and ministers of religion, who toast his memory with no more acquaintance with the man and his works than a few half-remembered quotations.

Oliver Wendell Holmes, the genial American humourist, once expressed surprise that Calvinistic Caledonia could take saucy Robert Burns to her straight-laced bosom without breaking her stays. For Burns, like Paine and Voltaire, was a Deist. Of all other religion, save what flowed from a mild Theism, he scarcely showed a trace. In sober truth, one can scarcely call it a creed at all. It was, in the last analysis, mainly a name for a particular mood of sentimentalism, the expression of a state of indefinite aspiration. The "Holy Willies" of Orthodoxy have made the utmost uses of this emotionalism, but Christians cannot read Burns' virile verse without loosening the shackles of their faith. David Hume's young freethinking contemporary did not merely express his dissent from Calvinism, or even Puritanism. He struck at the Christian Superstition itself. Seeing quite plainly that priests trade on fear, he sounded a true note when he said scornfully:—

"The fear o' hell's a hangman's whip
To hand the wretch in order."

How he lashes the "unco' guid," and the rigidly righteous:—

"Sae pious and sae holy,
Ye've nought to do but mark and tell
Your naebour's fauts and folly."

And again:—

"Learn three-mile prayers, and half-mile graces,
Wi' well-spread looves, and lang, wry faces,
Grunt up a solemn, lengthened groan,
And damn all parties but your own,
I'll warrant then ye'er nae deceiver,
A steady, sturdy, staunch believer."

Burns never hesitated to make a frontal attack on religion:—

"D'yruple mild, D'yruple mild, th' your heart's like a child,
And your life like the new driven snaw,
Yet that wima save ye, and Satan must have ye
For preaching that three's ane an' twa."

The "Merciful Great God" of modern Christian belief excites his derision and indignation:—

"O Thou wha in the Heavens dost dwell,
Wha, as it pleases best Thyself,
Sends ane to Heaven and ten to Hell,
A' for Thy glory,
And no for any guid or ill
They've done afore Thee."

In view of Christian camouflage upon Burns' anti-religious opinions, it is necessary to insist that the poet's heresy was "four square to all the winds that blow." No one but a Freethinker could have written the striking lines:—

"A fig for those by law protected,
Liberty's a glorious feast.
Courts for cowards were erected,
Churches built to please the priest."

Burns has suffered grievously at the hands of hic-coughing Highlanders and maudlin ministers of religion, but professed critics might well give the corpses of defunct sentimentalities decent burial.

The fact remains that the real Burns is not the popular legendary figure of the Scottish manse and drawing-room. When the peasant-poet was received and duly patronized by the "unco-guid" aristocracy of Edinburgh, the poet was afloat on a treacherous sea. The cultured company that professed to admire him stood on the land and drank the poor labourer's health, and Burns raised his glass and bowed his acknowledgments on his frail craft. In spite of all the glib phrase-making of the critics, Burns belonged to an entirely different world to that which his patrons inhabited. The insuperable barriers between Burns, the rare genius, and his stupid, if well-meaning patrons, is not got rid of by postulating that they do not exist.

Like all pioneers, Robert Burns was much alone. So early was he in the field that he could do little more than anticipate Carlyle's "Exodus from Houndsditch," or his caustic apostrophe to the figure of Christ, "Eh, man, ye've had your day." But what Burns did was sufficient for his generation. He fought at fearful odds, and stood a real chance of being imprisoned for his boldness. As Carlyle says, "Granted the ship comes into harbour with shrouds and tackle damaged, the pilot is blameworthy, but to know how blameworthy, tell us first whether his voyage has been round the world, or only to Rams-gate and the Isle of Dogs."

The noblest quality in Burns's magnificent poetry is the eternal quality of honest indignation. It comes always with no veil of invention; it is blunt, simple as daily speech; the man himself talking before us. It is this quality that makes his "Jolly Beggars" a poem which stands alone in literature, not only unmatched, but incomparable. The beggars are not merely rebels; for them the laws and conventions of society have no real existence. So it was with Robert Burns himself. He rises above the network of priestly authority like a skylark. Every Freethinker will say of him what warm-hearted Burns himself said in his epitaph on his friend, "With such as he, where'er he be, may I be saved or damned."

MIMNERMUS.

Love's Counterpoint

LOVE is not all,
No matter what the amorist may say;
It soon can pall
And like all things on earth must pass away;
If sugar please and give us energy,
It cloyes the palate taken constantly.

Hate is not bad
If diligently kept within control,
But it is mad
To let it take possession of the soul;
Hate can be noble, honest, upright, clean;
Love can be such, but it is seldom seen.

To hate the vile,
To hate with energy the false and base,
Never to smile
On rogues who prey upon the human race;
This is to render service far above
The preaching of a universal love.

BAVARD SIMMONS.

Jeremy Bentham

THERE have been many Freethinkers of genius whose recognition by the world at large is too unmistakable for the Christians wholly to ignore their merit. Wherever possible these men are claimed as Christians. It is almost equally satisfactory to Christendom not to deny, but just to ignore the Freethought of the great Freethinker.

A more common course is the method adopted by many editors during the Bradlaugh Centenary. The famous Freethinker is described as "a religious reformer," "a severe critic of orthodoxy," or (as was said of John M. Robertson, by one writer), "He wrote and lectured about religion."

That great Freethinker, Jeremy Bentham, is thus described by his biographer, Charles Milner Atkinson, M.A., in an otherwise informative work (*Jeremy Bentham: His Life and Work*): "Although brought up in the tenets of the Church of England, Bentham does not seem to have accepted any theological creed. He in no way concerned himself with questions of dogma. In his view dogma might in certain circumstances promote the general happiness."

The standard edition of Bentham's works was very carefully edited by a Christian, Sir John Bowring, who discreetly, but unscrupulously, suppressed Bentham's main contributions to the destructive criticism of the Christian creed. It is true that Bentham was a most voluminous writer, and Bowring's edition runs into a dozen huge tomes. But the directly sceptical work we refer to was the ripest and latest of Bentham's publications. Bowring abused his duty to Bentham and to Bentham's fellow Freethinkers.

John M. Robertson's judgment was that "Bentham attacked both clericalism and orthodoxy. Bentham's Utilitarianism was so essentially anti-Christian that he could hardly have been more disliked by discerning Theists if he had avowed his share in the authorship of the Atheistic *Analysis of the Influence of Natural Religion*, which, elaborated from his MS. by George Grote, was published in 1822. The whole tendency of his school was intensely Rationalistic."

Atheists at least, understand Bentham's frequent use of the name "Juggernaut" (and its derisive abbreviation into the blasphemous "Jug"), as a nickname for the deity. Mr. Atkinson amusingly dismisses it as "a conveniently unintelligible synonym," but conveniently makes himself unintelligible by omitting to tell his readers for what or for whom it was a synonym!

Jeremy Bentham was born in Houndsditch, London, on February 15, 1748. He died in 1832. An early acquaintance with the superstitions of his father's servants (his mother died when he was very young) gave him a permanent antagonism to "ghosts" of all kinds. Bentham explained the life-long effect of being "plied with horrible fantasies and spectres" while a child. His words are full of meaning for many of us brought up similarly: "Although my judgment is wholly free from those superstitions," he said, "my imagination is not wholly so."

Bentham describes himself as "passionately fond of flowers, of cats and dogs and even mice," and he was always opposed to "blood sports" of all kinds. This and all humane sentiments which seek to substitute gentleness for strife are an essential part of Bentham's philosophy. "Every act," he well says, "by which, without prospect of preponderant good, pain is knowingly and willingly produced in any being is an act of cruelty, and, like other bad habits, the more it is indulged in, the stronger it grows."

He hated war. He believed that war was neither necessary nor salutary. He objected to those historians who would make the world appear to be a universal shambles. His criticism of Rapin's *History of England* voiced ideas which might have saved mankind from the tragedy of 1914. "Rapin is a soldier by trade," he exclaimed, "and his history is a history of throat-cutting on the largest scale for the sake of plunder; this throat-cutting and plunder being placed by him as at the summit of virtue."

In 1768 Bentham read Dr. Priestley's *Essay on Government*, which, he stated, suggested to his mind a phrase which epitomized the philosophy he later systematized and called Utilitarianism, and which Bentham had already long deliberated upon. Bentham's phrase was, "the greatest happiness of the greatest number." Doubtless his sources as he admitted, included Fénelon and others, and it is interesting to see Dr. Priestley's actual words, namely: "The good and happiness of the members (that is, the majority of the members of any state) is the great standard by which everything relating to that state must finally be determined." Note how Bentham improved on the dictum in many ways, most of all by exercising the dubious word "good," around which complex minds must always be debating.

Bentham was not by any means free from conservative ideas in practice. He was shocked by Wilkes's "bad manners." Worse still he was for some time hostile to the American revolution. He was naively tolerant of governments and political religious leaders who were constantly opposed to his own Utilitarianism. He had as private secretary Rev. John F. Cobb, D.D., of Trinity College, Cambridge. This man's fourteen years' well-paid service gave him every opportunity of knowing the sort of man Bentham was. He wrote a book called *Utilitarianism Unmasked*. It ought to be read by any Christian who cherishes a belief in Bentham's Christianity. Cobb tells many probably true stories showing Bentham always as an "infidel" in belief, conduct, conversation, companionships and an always ready help for "infidels and the infidel cause."

Cobb's evidence, the more valuable as it is notably that of a foe, finds not a single flaw (except blasphemous infidelity) in the character and conduct of this Freethinker. Even his worst attacks read like a fine testimonial. His experience of Bentham is summed up in these words: "Bentham scorned to bend his stubborn knee or to lift up his heart in prayer, considering all religions as a mode of superstition, as priestcraft, as an engine of the state, as the folly of dotards."

France was better known to Bentham than America, and he supported the French revolutionary cause from the first. He, with George Washington, received the distinguished honour paid only to half a dozen foreigners, of being made citizens of the new Republic, "because they had served the cause of liberty." Accordingly, Bentham was, he smilingly said, "a royalist in London, and a republican in Paris."

With the courage which only a great moral purpose could give him, Bentham's first enterprise was to oppose the teachings about Law of one of its most famous authorities. Blackstone, author of the classic *Commentaries*, incurred young Bentham's strenuous attacks. He attended Blackstone's lectures, and disagreed with all he said on Bentham's favourite topic—"natural rights." Here is a characteristic comment of Bentham's on the great commentator: "Blackstone carries the disingenuousness of the hireling advocate into the chair of the Professor. He is the dupe of every prejudice and the abettor of every abuse."

Bentham himself became a great lawyer. Indeed, had he cared to remain at the bar, it was confidently predicted by his friend Romilly that "the first eminence at the bar and the emoluments which attend it were at his command if he could have persuaded himself to accommodate his political principles to the wishes of those in power."

His own impulse led him to very different purposes. He wanted to fulfil his own aims. He wished to do the work which he believed to be important, and he wished to do it in his own quiet way far from crowds. So, at an early age, he retired from the bar, henceforth to live in the country, contented with an absurdly small income. (He was never sure of more than £90 a year).

Bentham's work is summed up by John Stuart Mill, who with his father, James Mill, deserves perhaps equal credit with Bentham for the Utilitarian philosophy: "Bentham found the philosophy of law a chaos—he left it a science. He found the practice of the law an Augean stable; he turned the river into it, which is mining and sweeping away mound after mound of its rubbish." Bentham's science of law was founded on the "principle of Utility," which he regarded as the foundation of the science of morality.

The ethic of Utilitarianism in the religious field seems an inescapable sequel to a repudiation of a Providential deity. This doctrine as a political inspiration is infinitely to be preferred to the establishment of a "Kingdom of Heaven" on earth. It is universal in its application as a principle. But you cannot draw up an Act of Parliament or found a political party on Utilitarianism, any more than on a belief in liberty or fraternity. In the long run, it will be found that laws and systems tested by Utilitarianism apply the test of Freethought to the problems of mankind. All other tests rely upon instincts and interests, passions and prejudices, racial and religious bias, or the accidents of birth and education, which even in some noble characters fetter the reformer in legislation and administration.

"Utilitarianism" was not the only phrase coined by Bentham. He was the author of that great word "Internationalism."

GEORGE BEDBOROUGH.

The Genesis of Culture

A vast literature relating to man's emergence from primitive savagery towards civilization has accumulated in recent decades. The late Sir Edward Tylor may be regarded as its leading pioneer, and his example served to encourage Frazer, Westermarck, Keith, Crawley, Hartland and other eminent anthropologists in their fruitful labours. Unfortunately, this fact is sometimes forgotten by certain able investigators, whose theories run counter to those advanced by Tylor and his successors.

An important volume, illustrated with 74 plates, from the pen of Harold J. Peake—*Early Steps in Human Progress*, Sampson Low, 12s. 6d. net—has now been added to the imposing collection of anthropological studies. In his opening chapter Mr. Peake surveys the various races of extant mankind. He then reviews our present knowledge of the men of departed times, and emphasizes the marked differences that distinguished the human and semi-human forms whose fossil remains have been discovered. All save one of these several species are now extinct. Peake concludes that this surviving stock—*Homo sapiens*—has been so much modified in the course of "the past twenty thousand years, that it is now possible to distinguish a large number of varieties of races."

Peake thinks that modern man emerged in regions situated to the south of the prolonged mountain

chain that extends from the Pyrenees to the Himalayas, and continues its course to the Malay Peninsula, at the time when the defunct Neanderthal race was wandering through Northern Asia to Europe. The early ancestors of modern man are assumed to have been brown in skin colour, with dark eyes and hair, and bearing skulls of medium breadth, whose stature tended to vary with their physical exertion, and the food supply furnished by their hunting successes. Peake also considers that in addition to this variation man's skin "became darker towards the south-east, until it was nearly black in what are now the East Indian Islands, which were then connected with the mainland mass, and that as the skin varied from light brown to nearly black, the hair at the same time passed from wavy to frizzy."

During this period Northern America, Europe and Asia remained in the grip of glaciation, but as the temperature rose, and the ice and snow retreated towards their Alpine and Arctic homes, modern humanity appeared in Europe, and when the Ice Age had completely terminated, America itself was at last invaded by mankind.

Various hypotheses have been advanced to explain the glaciation of the Northern Hemisphere in past ages. Probably no single cause will account for this intense frigidity. Peake, however, persists in his previously expressed opinion that this widespread glaciation resulted from a greater elevation of the land masses which occasioned an enormous increase in the snowfields of the highland areas. Concerning the time that has expired since man's first appearance, Peake favours the moderate estimate of 250,000 years. Prof. Elliot Smith, on the other hand, concludes that this, the Pleistocene and historical Period, covers one million years, but chronological uncertainties such as these will be rectified by increased research.

Peake's review and appraisal of the tools and weapons of ancient man are replete with interest and instruction, while the story of their evolution rivets the attention of the reader. The origin, improvement, and occasional deterioration of these artifacts are traced to the abundance or dearth of provender; the replacement of a food-collecting by a food-producing economy; a propitious or harsh environment, whose rigours may have been intensified by drought and cold.

In addition to stone, primitive man utilized crude implements of wood and bone, but most of these have perished. Still, his stone artifacts have been preserved in enormous numbers although the purpose for which some of these were employed remains an open question. Nevertheless, it seems established that human progress in the art of shaping stone implements, at least in Europe, resulted in large measure from the improved methods of manufacture introduced by incoming peoples from Asia and Africa.

Thus dawned the Neolithic or New Stone Age in the West. This was a period distinguished by the production of well ground and polished artifacts. The birthplace of this advanced art is still undecided, but it appears probable that the Near East was the home of the new industry, for it is invariably associated with agriculture. "Axes of this type," observes our author, "are always found in association with evidence of agriculture, and suggest that with grain growing the art of the woodcutter and the carpenter arose." Hoes, borers, scrapers and other useful implements were now in general use. "In addition to these tools," we are reminded, "stag antlers were frequently used as picks, and numbers of these have been met with within the flint mines at Cissbury in Sussex, and at Grime's Graves, as well as at the

bottom of the ditch that surrounds the great temple at Avebury."

Not merely man's discovery, but his use of fire dates back to very remote centuries, and Peake's survey of this theme is extremely interesting. Also, the evolution of modern methods of artificial illumination, and the development of appliances for kindling flame are graphically portrayed. Attention is directed to the Bryant and May Museum of fire-making appliances, in which is exhibited a splendid collection illustrating the various modes of flame production in use throughout the world.

The beauty of savage art, has long commanded the admiration and wonder of archæologists. Several theories have been propounded to explain its origin, progress, and decline. Peake inclines to the opinion that cave art possesses a magical significance. Arctic conditions reigned in Europe when the finest specimens of primitive art were created. Perhaps we may assume that the prolonged winter season of Palæolithic Times favoured the preservation of the flesh-fool provided by the animals slain in the hunting months, and thus gave the early artists leisure to pursue their task. In any event, it was with the close of the Upper Palæolithic Period that artistic achievement deteriorated. "The Ice Age," states our author, "was passing away, and the winter holiday was becoming curtailed, so the drawings had to be more hurriedly done. When this age was over, and the forest had spread over nearly the whole of Europe, and the Ice Age had finally passed away, we find in the succeeding Mesolithic Age that complete degeneration had set in and the once realistic figures of men and animals had become conventionalized into a series of signs, the origin and meaning of which would have been unintelligible if we did not possess a series exhibiting their gradual descent. Thus, under the stress of hardship during the Mesolithic Age, the fine art of the Upper Palæolithic Age gradually degenerated into apparently meaningless symbols until they disappear altogether."

Peake, among his other studies, deals with animal domestication. He notes that when the Ice Age had ended it was followed by conditions of widely extended forest and pasture. Then the animals that had survived the rigours of the Glacial Ages congregated within the meads and parkland where herbage was abundant. From Europe to Eastern Asia these greenlands extended, and where the animals were gathered, there also repaired the men who hunted them. With the spreading of the forest domain in Western Europe, the herbivorous quadrupeds wandered further and still further East, and the hunters who followed them there appear to have tamed cattle, the horse, the camel, as well as other animal forms.

The discovery and cultivation of cereals are treated in detail, and the Near East is assigned as the birthplace of corn-growing. Until 1931, the earliest evidences of grain-culture came from Egypt and Mesopotamia. It is now inferable that an early husbandry may have been introduced into both these regions from some intermediate area. Years since, Prof. Breasted pointed to the fact "that from the delta of the Nile, through Palestine, Syria and Mesopotamia to the Persian Gulf, was a long curved area suitable for cultivation." This he terms the *Fertile Crescent*, and somewhere within this region he thinks that agriculture originally arose.

Many other problems of primary importance are studied in this fine work. These embrace the evolution of writing, early metallurgy, land and water transport and the beginnings of trade. There is thus full scope for a subsequent review.

T. F. PALMER.

Acid Drops

As a "gesture of peace," the French Government has cancelled its autumn military, naval and aerial manoeuvres. This is characteristically French in its logic. It is a frank admission of what anyone above the intellectual rank of a Moron must know, that these military tattoos, naval manoeuvres, and air-force displays are nothing but encouragements to militarism. They are gigantic recruiting agencies. On the one hand, by putting before the youthful mind the pomp and glitter of military display they encourage quite false ideas of what a soldier's life means, and on the other, they are intended to show the world that we are ready for war, and are always improving our effectiveness. It is also a warning to others that they must make ready also, for no one in their senses can expect other nations not to prepare for war because "we" (British, French, Italian) show that we are getting more and more efficient.

And each of the parades are living lies because they misrepresent the facts of a soldier's life. They lie by suppression, and distort by misrepresentation. The glitter and display of an Aldershot Tattoo is as far from reality as may be. To be a truthful picture of a soldier's life there should be examples of the reduction of the man to a mere cipher, the bullying petty officer, the treatment of grown men as irresponsible children, and the denial to the soldier of the many rights possessed by civilians. And when mimic battles are fought for the benefit of the public, they should include representations, say of the effects of gas in warfare, of the filth and bestiality of trench life, of the work of "delousing" stations, of the maimed bodies, and of the brutalizing consequences of modern warfare, not omitting the starvation of the old and the weak, and childish, as a method of making a country submit. If this formed part of these military displays we fancy they would soon cease. We must add that if the Incitement to Disaffection Bill were now law it is quite clear that the publication of these notes would open us to a prosecution.

One other consideration. In due course we shall have another Armistice Day celebration with its usual glorification of militarism—and all the nasty details left out. Ever since this function was established we have protested against its use as a vast recruiting agency; and of late years we have noted that some newspapers and preachers have followed our lead. Now we are suggesting that if a couple of thousand of the blind, the armless and the legless, the wrecks of the last war, were carried to Whitehall on November 11, and placed there during the whole of the ceremony, there would be a greater blow struck at militarism than anything else could be. It would help the youth of the present day (to whom the war is history, seen through a veil of political and military lines) to realize what war really means. But if this were done we fancy the whole ceremony would be abandoned. The lie of religion and the lie of militarism are very much akin.

Some people can never forget or be ashamed of their past crimes. The *Christian World* quotes its own unchivalrous leading article of fifty years ago condemning Charles Bradlaugh. Bradlaugh had just lost his appeal against the Crown in an action which he never raised but had to fight. The very *Christian World* reprints its own insolent baseness comparing this public-spirited action to an action brought by an infamous "claimant" named Arthur Orton. The *World* said, "it can hardly be denied that Mr. Bradlaugh's contention was based upon forensic niceties and legal casuistry, and was as hollow as Orton's." History shows how the Crown case was dropped in the end, and how all that Bradlaugh claimed was finally granted as the inherent rights of a constituency. The *Christian World* should imitate the House of Commons, and expunge its faulty story from its own records.

The Rev. Leslie F. Church, writing up the Sermon on the Mount, almost disarms criticism by reminding us that "fairy-tales have always been popular." He calls

this alleged "Sermon," "the Magna Charta of the New Kingdom," and quotes Papini's comic remark: "It is man's greatest title to existence." Mr. Church seems to think that the word "happy" is a synonym for "blessed." Christ was not so silly as to say that mourners are "happy." What He is said to have said is that they are "blessed." The Oxford Dictionary explains that to "bless" means "to consecrate," and gives its derivation as: "to consecrate with blood." Christianity has nothing to do with "happiness on earth," except to take it away.

"Can a business man be a good Christian?" asks the Rev. Ernest Barrett, M.A. Christians "do" a lot of business, and many of them "do" a great many people. Most of the swindlers of modern England were out and out Christians from Jabez Balfour to Horatio Bottomley. Balfour and his friend Hobbs always opened their daily work with prayer. Bottomley's "Prince of Peace" rhetoric is as famous as his glorification of "a business Government," and the deal in war-loan.

Mr. Telford has written a eulogy of the new Methodist Hymn Book, with biographies of the authors. Hymn No. 350, "With broken heart and contrite sigh," was written by a "great" man named Elven, a Baptist preacher. He was so "great" that he dared not go into the water himself to baptize anybody. According to Mr. Telford, if the big man had got wet through, it would have taken a lot of trouble to get clothes to fit him. Mr. Spurgeon hoped Mr. Elven's heart was as large as his body.

When the Methodist College held its annual meeting a distinguished company took part, including the famous cricketer, C. B. Fry, now Commander of a Naval Training Ship. Fry made some very weak jokes wrapped up in a form all the students must have gravely resented. For instance, he said, "When a boy comes to my training ship I always try to get a photograph of his mother." The other guests included somebody described rather strangely as "the Master of Jesus." Whoever could he have been?

The Archbishop of Canterbury must be sorry he spoke in terms of modified enthusiasm for Hitler the other day. His enemies will always quote his saying that he "had the greatest sympathy with the immense, undoubted, and on the whole, beneficent awakening which had come to Germany and German life in every aspect, in the remarkable revolution associated with the name of Herr Hitler." This was said on June 7, Three weeks later the Archbishop would have modified his remark.

On the same occasion the Bishop of Chichester took a more professional view of the German situation. He was frank enough to admit that the English (by which he meant the Christian English) public would regard Hitlerism solely according to Hitler's treatment of Christianity. "Two forces," he said, "are fighting for the soul of Germany, the forces of Christianity, and the forces of Paganism. . . . If Paganism should conquer, if Great Britain once believed that Germany had in fact repudiated the Christian religion, the whole attitude of English people towards Germany would be one of grave doubt, and even alienation." We venture to assure the bigoted bishop that only very fanatical Christians and no good citizens judge a nation by such a standard.

Roman Catholics have commenced a vigorous attack upon "indecent" pictures in our cinemas. Whether this will succeed remains to be seen, but there was a splendid chance for God to show on which side he was, during a thunderstorm in London, the other week. A fire-ball struck the roof of the Church of SS., Mary and Michael, in Commercial Road, two slates were broken and the lightning ripped up some leather work in the church. No one was hurt, but that was because the church was empty. Now the question which puzzles us

is, did not the Lord know it was one of his own blessed churches he was striking, or did he try to hit an "indecent" cinema and missed it, striking a church instead? Surely the holy cross on the church should have shown God he was making a mistake? We give it up.

The Moderator of the Federal Council of the Free Churches of England and the President of the National Council of the French Churches of England—that is, two Nonconformist parsons—have addressed a letter to the *Times* on the question of "reunion." They think that the Bishops of Birmingham, Leicester, and Ripon, and Dr. Dearmer, and the Rev. G. Rogers, can speak entirely for the Church of England. The *Church Times* settles the question brutally and frankly. This paper considers "the approach is irregular, and unrepresentative, unauthorized, and most undignified, and not at all calculated to promote Christian reunion." That's the stuff to give 'em. This "reunion" of Nonconformists and Anglo-Catholics, or to put it another way, brothers-in-Christ, should be squashed at its very inception. Christians do so love each other!

"As an astronomer," writes Mr. Calder, Curator of Harvard University Observatory, "I do not turn to the Bible for cosmological information. I am a reverent Agnostic. I should not expect to comprehend the Maker of all this complex universe. . . . But when I go to Church I want to hear a sincerely consecrated man who prays as if he were sure he had a party at the other end of the line." A very reverend, not to say absurd Agnostic! But at least he admits that in his own business he has no room for the idiocies which entertain him when he is off duty.

Canon Barker, K.H.C., Director of Religious Education for the diocese of London, gave away the prizes at a London Church School last week. He emphasized the need for increased religious education. The Infants' Class then gave an entertainment. Canon Barker, in a later speech said, "We must have Christian teachers; our children must be taught by men and women who believed in the Lord." He rejoiced that boxing was being encouraged at the school.

A Streatham vicar has his doubts about Prayers for Rain. But then, he says, "We prayed and it is raining." The Rev. W. R. K. Robinson "leaves it at that." Coincidence? Perhaps. We wonder what wonderful help his flock will get from a bastard agnosticism of that character.

The Rev. Porter Goff, at a South London Church, presided at a "Mass Sunday School Rally," in aid of the National Children's Home, which has the care of 4,000 children. A collection was made, which resulted in harvesting £5 10s. The two "Lessons" of the Day were read by children. Children also sang Anthems. We wonder how old the child was who prepared Mr. Goff's sermon, which was childish enough, saying (*inter alia*) that the existence of Jesus was "demonstrated best by the lives they led."

The etiquette of the Kingdom of Heaven is expounded by the Rev. Oswald Bainton of Brixton Hill. It seems "It is an insult to the Most High when people clatter down the aisle of God's House during prayer or the reading of God's Word." We wonder how Mr. Bainton knows that God feels insulted? Really, it seems much more reasonable to suppose that Mr. Bainton's vanity is disturbed. These late comers don't interrupt God in anyway. Mr. Bainton ought to know the difference between himself and God.

The Lord Chancellor in censoring a play called "Genesis II" evidently objects to a burlesque of the Bible, and to the attempts often made to make religion entertaining and amusing. If the Censor had power over the churches, chapels and "groups," he would shut down thousands of "performances" every Sunday. We

as Freethinkers totally oppose such censorship, but we think some of these mountebank shows ought to pay the Entertainment Tax.

The Rev. S. Jones Jackson tells us he used to be a cricketer. He naively adds: "There is nothing wrong in cricket." But he came to the conclusion that he was putting cricket first and his ministry second. God "took" him from his wicked (we almost said "wicket") preference, and then, he boasts, he was able to lead young fellows to Christ, who could lick him on the cricket-field. Mr. Jackson has not quite convinced us that he owes "thanks to God that there is humour in holiness." It is usually of the unconscious kind.

At a "Jubilee Convention" at Southport, the Rev. Mr. Jessop indulged in a variety of wisecracks. Here are some of the "mouthfuls": "Put off the Old Man and give the Holy Ghost a chance." "The Carnal mind still exists in the believing soul." "The very people who lead you to Jesus may keep you out of the blessing." "When God destroys sin he is not taking away anything essential." "Man was created in the image of God, but the stream got poisoned at its very source."

It is dangerous to rejoice prematurely. Prof. Farmer said at Central Hall, that when we first read Matthew xxv. 40, we are "glad at its very simplicity." But wait, says the Professor, "it is not so simple and genial and pleasant and helpful as it at first appears." We always thought there was a nigger in the wood-pile. The Professor says it is because there is a "When" in it. "It is no comfort," he tells us, "to know that we may be judged by things we have forgotten."

Another new Roman Catholic Church was opened a few days ago at Wolverhampton. Archbishop Williams, who officiated, said that during the last five years, twelve new churches had been opened in the diocese, two are in the process of being built and six new parishes have been founded with three new Mass centres. Thus, unemployment, poverty, and misery can be rampant; but money will always be found for new churches—even such centres of crass credulity and superstition as the Roman Church still insists upon. Yet some reverent Rationalists tell us our fight is, thank heaven, almost over! Perhaps they can explain this constant building of new churches?

Ten thousand people in Ireland, headed by President de Valera and many of his Ministers, all knelt—or rather grovelled—in the road-side paying homage to St. Brigid, an Irish Saint born, so it is claimed, 1500 years ago. Cardinal MacRory presided at the solemn Benediction over the relics of the Saint, which were in a golden casket, and Father Antonine declared that had the whole nation gathered to pay tribute to the Saint—he meant grovelled in front of the relics—it would not have been too great an honour for their country's patroness. Miss Alice Curtayne, the author of a life of St. Brigid, claimed that the Saint was absolutely modern. She was a literary and cultural inspiration, and the "Saviour of the feminine ascetic movement in Ireland." What wonderful people these Catholic saints were if we only knew them! It would be interesting to know, however, whether, like other famous female saints, St. Brigid ever bathed? The real truth about all these "saints" is, if it can be had, and if any particular saint ever lived, that they were almost all, filthy, stupid and credulous; and we doubt whether St. Brigid is any exception.

Mr. Tom Williams is a Labour M.P. According to the *Christian World*, he succeeded in stirring the House to a very high emotional indignation by a recent speech. We wondered if Mr. Williams had unexpectedly discovered one or other of the many social problems of the day. We need have had no fear. This Christian M.P. was moved to tears because at some of the Dog Race Tracks there are conveniences for babies to be cared for.

Crèches at Church junketings are perfectly correct. When they are found at other places of amusement the pious House of Commons is moved to what the *Christian World* calls "general disgust." We too feel disgusted—at such humbug.

Mr. Prince-White, in the *Daily Mail*, the other day, devoted nearly two columns to an article on "Religion among the People." He is quite disturbed that so many people actually believe that "our country parsons are still cast in an eighteenth century mould." This idea is "immeasurably far from the truth." The sermons he has heard are indeed very far "advanced." Well, if they are anything like those which are broadcasted from time to time, one can only say that they are "immeasurably far" from ordinary sense, for most of them are conglomerations of credulous rubbish. Mr. Prince-White quotes the Rev. R. G. Griffith of Farnborough, Kent. This gentleman is a shining example of showing you how Jesus never meant what he said—only what Mr. Griffith says he meant.

For example, Christ's saying: "Whoever shall say to his brother, 'Thou fool,' shall be in danger of hell-fire," could not possibly mean this. "Fool" here does not mean fool, and "hell-fire" does not mean hell-fire. What this beautiful and Christ-like saying really means is, that if you don't or can't tolerate people with whom you differ you "certainly make a hell-fire" for yourselves, for Jesus told you "to love one another." Besides God is love, and Christ is so very, very tolerant that he simply could not mean what he said. Thus Mr. Prince-White proves conclusively that our modern parsons are not of the eighteenth century cast, and that they are beautifully "modern." The *Daily Mail*, like others of our "great" national dailies, prints this kind of unmitigated nonsense in the name of religion, but most intelligent people surely can read between the lines. They are ashamed of hell-fire as taught by Jesus, and are ashamed of the language he uses against those who differ from him. And this shame is a step in the right direction—namely, towards Freethought.

Dr. Joseph Fort Newton assures us that "Religion means just Friendship." Oh Yeah! It reminds us of school-boy howlers, such as: "A vacuum is the place where the Pope lives." "Joseph was a goat of many colours." "The Apostles' Greed was all the Articles of the Faith rolled into one." "A priest is a man who burns insects in the City Temple." "A graven image is an idle maid, with hands." "The Israelites were fed with Mammon in the wilderness." "A prophet is a man who sells things for more than they are worth."

Fifty Years Ago

NOTHING whatever is said in the Bible concerning the unbelief of Dives or the faith of Lazarus. Dives might have been the orthodox believer and Lazarus the infidel for aught that Christ says or hints to the contrary. And it is inconceivable—except to modern clergymen—that Christ should have been utterly silent concerning that which he intended to be the chief lesson of his striking parable. The simple and obvious fact is—but ministers, if they would be successful, of course must not recognize it—that Christ's story deals only with wealth and enjoyment on the one side, contrasted with poverty and consequent suffering on the other. No ethical considerations are imported into the narrative. Christ thought that it was immoral to be rich and happy, and that the highest morality included destitution, beggary and misery. It was the poor, both in worldly possessions and in spirit, whom he blessed. Riches he always denounced. It was easier, he said, for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. A rich man could not possibly be saved except by a special miracle. It is solely against wealth that the parable is directed, and not against unbelief.

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THE FREETHINKER

FOUNDED BY G. W. FOOTE.

EDITORIAL:

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TO CORRESPONDENTS

R. J. JENKINSON.—Very pleased to hear from you. It is not easy to outgrow a teaching that has been part of one's intellectual being, but you appear to have succeeded. We are forwarding your letter to Mr. Clayton. He will be interested.

A. LE LEIVRE.—Much obliged.

J. W. EBSWORTH.—Mr. Tweedale's yarns of his spirit experiences may be multiplied by anyone who takes notice of such stories. The one sure thing is that he can say nothing that a certain number of people will either question or reject. These stories are really not worth bothering about.

W. ROGERS.—The logic of your letter appears to be that Mr. Cohen is very good when you agree with him, but quite a fool when you do not. That is quite a common attitude. We note what you say about the person who gave up reading the *Freethinker* because of the things he did not agree with, that is, at the very point when it would probably have done him good. We write, of course, for people to read, but do not write to please anyone. That would be to let the *Freethinker* sink to the level of the ordinary paper.

I. SEIBERT.—Will attend to the matter as soon as possible.

T. W. BIRTLEY.—Pleased to hear from you. Your name recalls some very pleasant and sometimes exciting times the movement had many years ago. We trust your good health will continue.

H. THOMPSON.—There are several ways of dealing with a fool, but the best of all ways is to leave him alone.

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

The "Freethinker" will be forwarded direct from the publishing office at the following rates (Home and Abroad):—

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

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

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

Sugar Plums

Two nasty jolts have been given the British Branch of the Fascist Movement. One is the publication of the testimony of medical men, members of Parliament, hospital patients, etc., on the organized savagery of the gangsters' assault on men and women at the Mosley meeting at Olympia. The other is the "clean-up" by one of Mosley's spiritual brethren in Germany. That is too strong for most stomachs—that are not belonging to members of the Fascist party.

Since the unmistakable blackguardism of the Mosley business, the leaders, who are behind Mosley have evidently called a halt, and the Blackshirt British Nazis have been very quiet and very humble, and have cancelled several meetings. Their docility is remarkable, but not unusual in the history of Fascist heroism. And Mosley, the heroic film artist, has to obey the orders of those who really pull the strings. But the plain fact is that, short of something new happening that will give the Hitlerite-Mosley group in this country a new start, Fascism here appears to be on its last young legs. What we now have to guard against is that the threat to freedom offered by the Fascists is not utilized by those in power to further restrict freedom of thought and speech.

The Rev. K. C. Budd, of St. Oswald's Church, Norbury, makes an admirable protest against the views of the Fascists. He specially objects to the pretence expressed in *The Blackshirt*, that "Fascism means religious freedom." Mr. Budd very properly replies that "As the Fascists have not yet convinced us that they intend freedom of speech, this might be attended to before they promise freedom of religion."

"Freedom" is a glorious word, and it is as well to know exactly what the Blackshirted Branch of the Nazi Party means by it. It is explained, quite frankly, that by religious freedom the cult of "Ozzy Mo" means that the whole power of the organized State will be behind Christianity, and that parsons will be at liberty to preach, so long as they do not touch upon politics. If they do they will be "beaten up" as those who ventured to interrupt at Olympia were beaten. The last issue of the *Blackshirt* should be remembered for this exposition of principle.

We have received a further sum of 3s. from Mr. W. Don Fisher, in furtherance of his promise to contribute 1s. per week to defray the cost of distributing free copies of this paper. Mr. W. James wishes to follow the example set by Mr. Fisher, and encloses a cheque of 5s., to cover the first five weeks. Mr. James apologizes for the smallness of his contribution; the apology is quite unnecessary, it is the will behind it that counts. If more of our readers were interested enough to work for subscribers, we feel that nearly all our difficulties in the direction of finance would be overcome.

Commencing to-day (July 22) Mr. G. Whitehead will begin a fortnight's lecture campaign in Glasgow and District. Local saints will, of course, give all possible support, and an effort will be made to revive the Paisley Branch N.S.S. Paisley friends willing to co-operate in the effort are asked to introduce themselves to Mr. Whitehead or any official present. From reports we understand the prospect at Paisley is very promising.

Messrs. Brighton and Clayton are taking full advantage of the fine weather, and both report excellent meetings in towns and villages of Lancashire, Durham, and Northumberland. Both speakers possess ability, tact, and courtesy, and deliver the message of Freethought in an effective manner. The scheme is a very successful one, and with greater resources the Executive could extend it to other parts of the country.

THE NEMESIS OF HISTORY

In the tremendous breaking forth of a whole people, in which all degrees, tempers and characters are confounded, delivering themselves by a miracle of exertion, from the destruction that is meditated against them, is it to be expected that nothing will happen? When men are sore with the sense of oppressions, and menaced with the prospect of new ones, is the calmness of philosophy or the palsy of insensibility to be looked for? . . . They learn it (vindictive punishment) from the Governments they have lived under; and retaliate the punishments they have been accustomed to behold. The heads stuck upon spikes at Temple Bar, and which remained for years, differed nothing in the horror of the scene from those carried on spikes at Paris. . . . It may be said that it matters nothing to a man what is done to him after he is dead; but it signifies much to the living; it either tortures their feelings or hardens their hearts, and in either case it instructs them how to punish when power falls into their hands.

Lay then the axe to the root, and teach Governments humanity. It is their sanguinary punishments which corrupt mankind. . . . it is over the lowest class of mankind that government by terror is intended to operate, and it is on them that it operates to the worst effect. They have sense enough to feel that they are the objects aimed at; and they inflict in turn the examples of terror they have been instructed to practice.

From "The Rights of Man," by Thomas Paine.

Piety and Mirth

"If I had my way, I would insist on every minister of religion being examined as to his sense of humour," Mr. T. N. Hall said in his address to the Liverpool Rotary Club as its new President.

He added, amid laughter, "If it were discovered that he had none, I should say 'Turn him down—he is of no use for the Church.'"—*From a Liverpool Daily Paper.*

COME, Mr. Hall,
Are you aware
You've left us all
A bit in the air?

We can't be sure
If you're finessing.
You're too obscure.
You've got us guessing.

Parsons require
A sense of humour?
Surely, sire,
It's only a rumour.

People don't go
To Church for fun.
Really, you know,
It isn't done.

Sin's correction
Hardly evokes
The predilection
For seeing jokes.

I'm sure, indeed,
That comic relief
Would quickly lead
To disbelief.

So I surmise
That from the Comic
Would thus arise
Sins economic.

And these we know
Are more abhorred
Than sins that go
Against the Lord.

Be sure the priest
Whose fare was fun
Would die of a feast
He'd scarce begun.

So look in vain
For curate's dimple.
The reason's plain,
The problem's simple;

Many are called
But few are funny.
Don't be appalled;
It's a matter of money.

TWINKLE.

THE POWER OF MIND

The achievements of the intellect have been greater than most people suspect. Its scope is not to be measured by any signal discoveries in science or philosophy, but in the general movement toward rational control. Evolution brings emancipation; it offers life the poise that secures judgment upon its actions and dreams, instead of the blind quick satiation of emotion. The reason is working out a vaster science than we dream of.

"*Religious Revolution of To-day,*"
by Professor James T. Shotwell.

If Everyone Did It

It was in my schooldays that this silly old fallacy, advanced as a moral argument, first came before my attention. It was a great favourite with most of the masters, as it still appears to be even with the relatively enlightened school teacher of to-day. What used to happen was this: a boy would put up his hand and ask if he might leave the room, evidently for a natural purpose. The hour might be inconvenient, or perhaps the master, customarily ignorant of human physiology, would have expected the boy to make use of a previous opportunity in the absence of any natural stimulus to do so. Feeling, however, that some sort of rationale was called for in refusing what looked like a legitimate request, the master would say, "What would happen if everyone were to ask the same thing?" I well remember how this used to strike me as indescribably stupid. I should have dearly loved to rise from my desk and open a debate with the master, but the mentality of the average schoolboy stops short of that. It always struck me forcibly that the argument was a silly sham, because, of course, it was based on the assumption of an eventuality that would never occur. But perhaps the worst fallacy was this: that if such an exceptional circumstance actually were to occur, owing, perhaps, to some pathogenic organism having got into the school diet, then it was the best of all possible reasons why the master should co-operate with the boys in the emergency.

Since then I have heard the argument advanced a hundred times, and in connexion with all sorts of questions, moral and social, but always as an answer to those who are seeking some new freedom. It is the stoutest bulwark of the disciplinarian, and for some reason or other he appears to "get away with it." I think the process by which the unsuspecting Average Man is tricked is this: the Average Man realizes that morality has an essential connexion with society as a whole. It is undoubtedly something that exists for everyone. Westermarck goes so far as to say that this universality is an essential ingredient of moral feelings as such, and that even where a man advances a moral precept against the accepted order, he feels its moral force to consist in the fact that if everyone saw the problem with ideal enlightenment there would be common agreement with the proposed innovation. Coupled with this we have the idea always uppermost in our minds that the principle of equity, itself of high moral status, implies that the rights of one shall be the rights of all. It is clearly unfair to deny to one what is conceded to another, unless some very good reason justifies a special privilege. From a foundation consisting of these ideas, perhaps only imperfectly grasped, it is easy to build up a plausible ethic from the argument "if everyone did it," and the Average Man meekly submits to the grossest restrictions on his liberty as a result. What he certainly does *not* grasp is what we might call the realistic principle in morals. He does not understand that morality is a mere function of the social organism, a mere behaviouristic response to the cultural needs of society, in the same way as hunger is a physiological response to the chemical requirements of the body. All moral principles therefore imply facts as their basis before ever we commence to argue how they shall be applied. Just as the mechanism of hunger and appetite has been evolved in harmony with bio-chemical facts, so the mechanism of morality has been evolved in harmony with the facts of social life. This introduces into morality a principle of realism, by which moral precepts

must concern themselves only with facts. To ignore this principle would be like setting out to regulate food without regard to the facts of dietetics. The fallacy, therefore, in this stupid argument, "if everyone did it," consists in the fact that we are dealing with a fanciful situation. Everyone will not do it. The case is built upon an illusion.

It is not till one comes into close contact with these orthodox moralists that one realizes how appallingly unrealistic they are. The man who will not allow people to say what they want, how they want, will tell you that the opportunity would thus be created for excesses in the form of indecency and profanity. And what would happen "if everyone did it?" This naive moralist actually thinks that everyone might. If not, what is he talking about? Moreover he does not seem to understand that the odd person who did would have his platform smashed by an outraged crowd, or find his hall empty half way through his address, according to the particular methods of his audience. In this way his platform technique would die a natural death, and he would not be left with the sense of martyrdom which disciplinary action invariably imparts. Instead of going about the world with a grievance and a sense of outraged virtue, he would have tested himself and his methods against an actual crowd of people and discovered the simple truth that he was distasteful to his fellow men. No better remedy exists.

This naive moralist who is always talking about what everyone might do meets us again in the religious sphere, in which indeed he figures most prominently. He is the man who informs us that, in the event of taking away people's religious beliefs, everyone would run amok. I think it was some learned bishop (I forget which, for they are all so learned) who suggested that an orgy of theft, adultery, murder, rapine, suicide and insanity would immediately follow the abdication of Jehovah. He confronts us again in the divorce courts. What if everyone wanted five wives? What if no one wanted children? What if what not? And these ignorant speeches come from the self-appointed Professors of Morality, men who have claimed the field of morals as a sphere in which they are to be treated as experts! Why is it that the clergy are so unrealistic? I think it is because they have been brought up to a philosophy that originated in things illusory, and they have attempted to carry forward through the ages what we might call a thoroughly unfaithful attitude towards the Universe. When science ultimately challenged their unrealism it challenged their bread and butter. Then their opposition to facts became reinforced and doubly embittered.

The more we succeed in getting rid of unrealism in morality, the better for us. I know it is perennial clap-trap to say that the character of life is changing, but it would seem at least more justifiable to-day than at any other time within living memory. This means that the realistic basis of morals is changing, and some of our moral sanctions will soon have to go by the board. Such changes as may occur can only do so when we get rid of the disciplinarian, and one way to get rid of him is to see through him and his sham philosophy. Next time, dear reader, he asks you what would happen if everyone did something, just say to him, "Everyone wouldn't do it; but supposing everyone did, then that is the best proof that it wanted doing."

MEDICUS.

THE "SWOTTERS"

"Close study," they say, which too often means tying one's brains in a knot, and putting a brake on thinking.

Honoris Causa

THE astute leaders of the Churches have always done what in them lies to keep the great seats of learning infected with religion. Fifty years ago a student who professed himself a Rationalist was a rare bird, and usually a pariah. But the times change, and one of the most disquieting features to the clerics in present-day university life is the fact that there has arisen quite a number of young men and women who decline to take anything for granted. No doubt a majority of these give a lip assent to the obsolescent tenets of the Church—for family and other reasons, and the "blatant Freethinkers" are merely in a minority. But the latter are the leaven that may yet leaven the whole lump!

Our universities, upon occasion, confer a degree upon some prominent person which is described as a degree *Honoris Causa*. That is to say, the degree is one to mark the University's recognition and appreciation of some signal work or service done by the honoured one as distinguished from the degrees that have to be studied for and gained by examinations.

In the Faculty of Divinity the degrees conferred *Honoris Causa* greatly outnumber those conferred in any other Faculty. It is said that the cleric in Scotland who aspires to the highest degree in Divinity sets himself to cut a figure as a Debater in Presbytery or Assembly, or to write a book. Spurgeon had his little joke about the D.D.'s of his day. He used to say that many a D.D. was just fiddle-de-dee. There is a danger in overrating the importance of a University training. Within recent years it is found to be more and more true that the possession of a degree is no guarantee of the possession of exceptional mental qualities. Indeed you will find M.A.'s applying for menial jobs and junior clerkships in mercantile offices.

Oxford made Mark Twain a D.C.L.—one of the wisest things it ever did. But the bestowal of such an honour on such a man by Oxford would have been inconceivable a hundred years before. Notably, Scotland did not rush to offer Mark any academic distinction. Mark in Scotland has been regarded merely as a jester—and often a *profane* jester at that. England is too easy-going and promiscuous in such matters for Scots Calvinism. The charge against England of a lack of discrimination is not always ill-founded. George Meredith, the great writer, was denied sepulture in Westminster Abbey—though the Dean and Chapter allowed the burial of a pugilist therein. But George Meredith was a friend and correspondent of George William Foote. And Foote himself was too big a man for Westminster Abbey.

It is always refreshing and encouraging to the Freethinking humanist when he sees a University cutting some of the old bonds. And it is as interesting to him to observe the process as to a parent who sees his youngster cutting his teeth. So with more enlightened ideas, imported into current thought by Rationalists, we find the great schools honouring the names of devoted citizens, who though finding no place on Church Rolls, have done something substantial to remove devitalizing, dehumanizing and uglifying influences in modern life. The humanist's main aims are to humanize, to beautify and to heal. When you supernaturalize instead, you prevent the achievement of these aims. You leave the sinister influences which dehumanize, uglify and corrode unassailed.

Edinburgh, for example, is in desperate need of Infirmary extension. Some few years ago an appeal for £500,000 was launched for this purpose; and after weary waiting only about half the amount was contributed. Yet Edinburgh has many huge ecclesias-

tical buildings, which could readily be adapted as hospitals or annexes subsidiary to the Royal Infirmary. Fear, ignorance, disease and dirt are characteristic of underdogs in every community, Edinburgh included. But no determined and united effort is made to attack these things. On the contrary, the Church of Scotland is launching a scheme for building new churches in suburban areas, for which it is asking £150,000. £50,000 of this sum has been subscribed in a few weeks. The Church will get its money all right on the promise of mansions in the sky, and the urgent needs of the poor who are fearful, ignorant, dirty, and diseased can go hang. The nebulosities of the Faith are far more important matters!

Yes, the Church will get its money for more ecclesiastical buildings, and its ministers will continue to get their stipends. The latter are not particularly keen on working *honoris causa*—just for the honour of the thing. The maintenance of the ministry is one of the first planks of Presbyterianism. The old Scotch Baptists conducted their churches for many years without an ordained and paid ministry. We don't find even in the New Testament that the evangelists and apostles were men who merely evangelized and preached. No, each one had a useful daily occupation, by which he maintained himself. Jesus Christ was a joiner; Paul was a tent-maker; Luke was a scribe; Matthew was an official of sorts in the public service. So that the old Scotch Baptists were scripturally justified in the institution of their system.

If a man is enthusiastic in any cause, he uses his energies in advancing it from sheer keenness and enjoyment, and not with an eye on monetary recompense. It is patent to anyone with half an eye or a cork leg, that a religious missionary can get into much closer and more influential contact with his fellow-men when he works beside them at a trade or profession. But there is still enough superstition embedded in human nature to make priestcraft even today a paying thing—especially for the big guns who capture the highest degrees *Honoris Causa*!

IGNOTUS.

The Book Shop.

"FICTION," wrote Joubert, "has no business to exist unless it is more beautiful than reality." Like all standards worthy of the name, this is a high one, and it might be taken to heart by our modern romancers. The reader can get all that is ugly and sub-human from the press that lives in the fool's balloon of thinking that it gives the public what it wants. From 2104, North Las Palmas Avenue, Hollywood, California, I have received a booklet, *Readers News Service*, issued monthly. This publication has taken on the task of honestly reviewing novels in the hopes of finding the best in books and fiction. It is a handcraft production and the subscription is one dollar per year. Spengler, who treated civilization on a Germanic scale, and, like most wordy philosophers, was incapable of producing from himself one word of hope for mankind in the whole world, is taken to task by Zona Gale, the novelist. Miss Gale, unlike most of our own novelists, can see a hole in an economic ladder, and to enable you to note the drift of her mind, I give the following quotation: "Spengler, but lately acclaimed as a profound philosophic historian, now pleads, it appears, for a return to 'the noble ideals of militarism.' 'Why,' asks Miss Gale, 'should we ever return? . . . We are only just struggling free from that cave and net into a juster economic order, in which any such by-product as war is unthinkable.'" From the notice of *One Smoke Stories*, by Mary Austin, it would appear that America has a book about Red Indian lore that England might have with advantage. I lately read through *Myths of the American Indians* (George G. Harrap &

Co., Ltd.), and found it fascinating and helpful in many ways. The writer, in one place, pays a mighty compliment to those who are regarded as uncivilized. "The savage," he states, "void of any clear conception of a supreme deity, sets up no claim that his is the only true church. If he is conquered in battle he imagines that it is owing to the inferiority of his own gods to those of his victor, and he rarely, therefore, requires any other reasons to make him a convert." You, reader, may locate Spengler's place in comparison with the freedom-loving Indian who committed the crime of defending himself when attacked—you will remember that he used a bow and arrow and did not know anything about Krupp and Thyssen.

Mr. Rathwell Wilson, who has almost traversed the world and written about it too, has published a small book of verse, *The Wandering Gentle's Song-Book*; the Channing Press, price 4s. 6d. net. It has many melodious and felicitous tunes, is very light and playful, but never dull. Votes for Mermaids is pitched in a happier key than Arnold's *Forsaken Mermaid*. *The Candid Carpenter* is fun in twelve lines, and if ever the late William J. Locke had a troubadour brother, Mr. Wilson must be the man. The moral of *The Path* may be more significant than the author thinks. It is diluted Omar, ascribed to Christ, but older than the hills; religions are chiefly a running away from oneself, and a shifting of responsibility from the individual.

After reading *Under the Greenwood Tree* for about the seventh time I tried Hardy's *A Pair of Blue Eyes*. One of the chief characters, a parson, has his sermons written for him by his daughter. Another character, William Worm, the handy man at the vicarage, has a stage gag for nearly all his appearances. William has noises in the head "like fish-frying," and this odd phenomenon reminded me of another, of more value, admirably crystallized for all time in the lines of Keats:—

"Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear'd,
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone!"

It is some sort of a trick in memory that I have never been able to have explained to me; why, at any odd moment, does there come into the head, tunes that have been heard at a concert, the music-hall, or on a gramophone? They come along unbidden and by a slight effort of will can be kept going as long as desired. There is abundance of good and sweet music at present, as well as a mass of less attractive things with which to give a lodging in the head, but there appears to be good ground for the Indian thought of the mind being selective of the particular thoughts to be given a welcome in one's headpiece. Hey, presto:—the words of command, and I can switch on without machine or record Brahms's Symphony in E Minor—of linked sweetness long drawn out—a truce to the howling and bawling of a Babylonian street, the thought of a disagreeable personality, of some old unhappy memory—this is the conclusion to a paragraph and not an introduction to some shoddy book on thought control.

We, as Freethinkers, are constantly reminded that, in exposing and explaining religion, we are flogging a dead horse. This reproach is part of the fallacy that society advances and advances and advances—to what, to where, is never asked. At the risk of taking up valuable space, I want to bring to the notice of readers the following extract from Lord Horder's letter to the *Times*, bearing on the Amendment of Road Traffic Bill. The majority of people may think, if they think at all, that the world is bursting with commonsense. Wordsworth described men as "children of a larger growth." Schopenhauer hated the needless cracking of whips: I dislike the caterwauling of a milkman who puts a bottle of milk on a doorstep, and Lord Horder dislikes motors and motor-cycles that are not made with silencers. Here is a fact for those who think that the frowsy metaphysics of religion are finished with. The noble Lord writes:—

One of the principal manufactures of silencers has publicly admitted that his firm is supplying "partial" silencers year by year in increasing thousands, not because there is the slightest mechanical or economic difficulty in supplying efficient silencers, but because the purchasers demand unnecessary noise. He added the curious plea that the manufacturers could not be blamed for meeting a public demand.

The italics are mine. And whilst this type of mind exists there will be ample raw material for assimilation of the entire output—I was going to state, of the writings of Mr. G. K. Chesterton and his school, but I will include the lesser in the greater, and say, of all plain and fancy religions. The little boy, now the man, wants a puffer to ride in, and it must make a noise. It is no revelation to the writer, who has never for one moment regarded the task of Freethought as a pastime; Wilde struck deeper than he knew when he wrote that "it is much more easy to have sympathy with suffering than it is to have sympathy with thought."

Since writing the third paragraph, I see that the issue of the *Freethinker* for the 8th instant contains on page 425, the same thought expressed differently. Under the title of "Mental Slavery," there is an excellent extract from *The Message of Asia*, by Paul Cohen-Portheim, which is worthy of repetition, for we can never have a surfeit of good sustenance for the brain. Here it is: "The truth is people who can control their ideas, who can think about what they want to think about, and what they want, are extremely rare."

Over an occasional teacup with little almond cakes, my philosopher friend gives me jewels which I treasure, and if I were of a mystical turn of mind I should call them "fairy gold." This philosopher embodies with a graceful wit profound truths in most of his conversation which would make professional philosophers weep with envy. Also, what I particularly like in these memorable meetings is his pinning me down to definitions. To me it is a process of mental slimming, in the same way that a reading of Spencer's *The Study of Sociology* disperses woolly thinking, and really gives us an answer to Nietzsche's penetrating question, "Good for what?" In the Apocrypha in *Ecclesiasticus* there is an injunction to the student to wear out the doorstep of the house of a good man. It is almost time that I repaired this philosopher friend's doorstep, and wild horses will not drag from me his name; and if a good woman is more precious than rubies, the friendship of a good man is a gold mine for those who can hold on to the simple verities of life. Needless to say, these verities belong to a church which will hold the whole living world, and then have room for more.

C-DE-B.

Correspondence

REACTION IN FREETHOUGHT

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Clearly Mr. Stafford is on the warpath. He is veritably laying about him with a truncheon. As for me, I feel like one of those innocent onlookers at a riot, who go to see the fun and end up in hospital. I was busy watching Mr. Stafford belabouring Mr. Ready, who kept coming up for more, suddenly he ups and catches me one unawares. Really, what will he not do to poor Mr. Taylor? But I shall have no sympathy for Mr. Taylor; he has deliberately stuck his head in the war area.

Mr. Stafford has done me the honour of reading my article with tolerable care, though it has caused him to spend perhaps more time in Hell than was my intention. My main argument, if I remember, was conducted at the pithead. But my critic really goes a considerable way with me. He agrees that people who think they are right prove troublesome. At all events we are to-

gether thus far. The parting of the ways comes when we get to the people who are in fact right. With them the case is different. I wonder if they are the People of the Dawn. Possibly, but—Ah, there are so many dawns, and each is followed by a sunset. I trust Mr. Stafford will forgive my cynicism. It is not of my choosing. It is forced upon me by Life.

Mr. Stafford keeps on looking forward to the dawn of social right. Bless my soul, that is second cousin to a teleological conception. For my part I cannot understand the meaning of "social right," except as a shifting value, essentially relative. Even the awe-inspiring "truth," which Mr. Stafford says we are seeking, appears to me in the same category. I see society as a growing organism, and "right" and "truth" as states of adaptation. Mr. Stafford will therefore understand my fear of these "right people," hawking "dawn" round the world. I fear them because even if, by a stroke of good fortune, they were right to-day, they might be wrong to-morrow."

MEDICUS.

SIR,—Although there seems no hope of getting a straightforward answer from Mr. Stafford, I should like to make one more effort. Perhaps it will help if I word the question more directly. Is Mr. Stafford, a professed Freethinker, in favour of that suppression of free criticism, which he says will be a feature of the upbuilding of a Socialist society?

So far, my insistence on that unambiguous issue and its implications has only resulted in my being falsely and irrelevantly accused of scurrility, misrepresentation, libellous statements and clap-trap. Even if these charges are true, they would not constitute an answer to my question, but as it is they are mere verbiage designed to fog the issue. Isn't this trick called "abusing plaintiff's attorney?"

Perhaps the fact that an affirmative answer would go far to prove my suggestion that lip-service is the real reason for the failure to meet the question. But whatever the reason, it is quite useless to throw "twenty odd years" of Freethinking at me: Mr. Stafford has, no doubt, given valuable service to the movement in that time, but as an argument in the present discussion it leaves me cold.

And when he parades that hoary old dodge about declining to discuss the matter any further with me unless I change my criticisms, well, as our American friends would say, "I should smile."

S. R. A. READY.

[This controversy threatens to become interminable, without the controversialists getting anywhere. Unless something fresh or decisive comes to hand, we shall be compelled to apply the editorial ban.—ED.]

FREETHOUGHT AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

SIR,—I am interested in the comments on my survey of "Freethought and Social Science." The first writer in the issue for July 8, refers to my expressions re "a vigorous people," etc., and discusses obstacles to the conveyance of existing abundance to those in need. Without ignoring grounds for betterment herein, what I am concerned to point to is physical defect and short-coming, and its remedy, even among those who certainly possess adequate means of sustenance and nurture. On the money question, and take it, the crux of the issue is not simply facilitating credit within the community, but adjustment of its token value to the currencies of other countries in the exchange of goods and services upon which, as a trading nation, we so largely depend. Both are matters open for scientific attack.

My second critic is of another order. He suggests that type of mind, not uncommon among disciples of the cult, so assured of the authority and infallibility of Socialist doctrine and prescription that those who fail to be impressed with their wisdom and utility are either wilfully blind or suffer from a congenital defect. It was not my purpose to examine its different programmes, or

to "produce an alternative policy to tackle those problems which Socialism can overcome." In a survey of the work and function of social science, I give reasons for questioning the first principle of Socialism in this relation, and indicate another line of approach, without exhausting the subject. And I fail to see in my statement that the Russian experiment incites revulsion in some—its bearing on the charge: "It may be a clever—and thoroughly dishonest—party trick in the heat of panic General Election to label the democratic Socialists of this country as 'Bolshevists run mad,' but to try to identify the two policies in the sober columns of the *Freethinker* is an insult to the intelligence of its readers."

But the connexion between English Socialism and Bolshevism thus raised cannot be dismissed so lightly. True the Trade Union element of the Labour Party is now antagonistic, and with good reason, to Communism, that is, to the "Comintern's" agency here and its policy of violence. Other elements, within and without Parliament, draw inspiration from the U.S.S.R., and provide a programme to be compassed by dictatorial methods. At its annual conference, last May, the Socialist League passed a resolution without discussion, which urged it to take the lead in uniting the workers behind a militant programme. When Miss Susan Lawrence, a former Chairman of the Labour Party, spoke against united front activity with the Communists, and said she had stood by expecting to hear the resolution debated, Sir Stafford Cripps replied, if she stood by "she would miss the revolution!"

All which presents a greater danger to English Constitutional tradition than the banal "Fascism" these gentry themselves denounce.

AUSTEN VERNEY.

A BOUQUET

SIR,—It is now forty-three years since I first saw a copy of the *Freethinker*, placed in my hands by the late Charles Watts. While in the intervening years I have not taken it continuously, I have always held it to be the best Freethought paper in the world. Every article is sound and sensible. Your business management has always been liberal and courteous. The qualities which have caused the friends of the *Freethinker* to love it, and to cling to its support, have been within itself. The editor of a Freethought paper should always be courteous and fair, but at the same time firm. The business manager need not be as learned as the editor, but he should have a heart-felt interest in the cause, and be cordial toward all Freethinkers. This is more important when we realize that when we step into a Christian publishing house or other religious institution, we are treated always with courtesy and respect.

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LONDON.

INDOOR.

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1): 11.0, S. K. Ratcliffe—"Samuel Taylor Coleridge: Poet and Thinker."

OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN AND HACKNEY BRANCHES N.S.S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand): 6.0, Mr. H. S. Wishart—"The Evil of Religion—Now."

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (White Stone Pond, Hampstead): 11.30, Sunday, July 22, A Lecture. Highbury Corner, 8.0, A Lecture. South Hill Park, Hampstead, 8.0, Monday, July 23, A Lecture. Highbury Corner, 8.0, Thursday, July 26, A Lecture.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Brockwell Park): 7.30, Sunday, July 22, Mr. L. Ebury. Rushcroft Road, near Brixton Town Hall, 8.0, Tuesday, July 24, Mr. G. F. Green. Stonhouse Street, High Street, Clapham, 8.0, Wednesday, July 25, Mr. P. Goldman.

WEST HAM BRANCH (Corner of Deanery Road, opposite the Library, Water Lane, Stratford, E.): 7.0, Mr. G. F. Green.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 12.0, Sunday, Mr. W. B. Collins. 3.30, Platform No. 1, Messrs. Wood and Bryant. Platform No. 2, Messrs. Saphin and Tuson. 6.30, Platform No. 1, Messrs. Collins and Hyatt. Platform No. 2, Messrs. Saphin and others. Wednesday, 7.30, Mr. Campbell Everden. Thursday, 7.30, Messrs. Wood and Saphin. Friday, 7.30, Two Lectures.

COUNTRY.

OUTDOOR.

BOLTON BRANCH N.S.S. (Town Hall Steps, Bolton): 7.0, Mr. Jack Clayton.

BRIGHTON BRANCH N.S.S. (The Level): 8.0, Mr. J. J. Byrne—"Contradictions in the Bible."

BURNLEY BRANCH (S.D.F., St. James' Hall): 11.0, H. P. Turner—"How God Grew Up."

BLYTH MARKET: 7.0, Monday, July 23, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

GLASGOW BRANCH N.S.S.—Mr. G. Whitehead will lecture in the following places: Dunne Square, Paisley, 8.0, Saturday, July 21. West Regent Street, 8.0, Sunday, July 22. The Mound, Edinburgh, 7.0, Monday, July 23, Tuesday, July 24, and Wednesday, July 25. Dunne Square, Paisley, 7.30, Friday, July 27, and Saturday, July 28.

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N.S.S. (Corner of High Park Street and Park Road): 8.0, Thursday, July 19, Messrs. J. V. Shortt and C. McKelvie. Queen's Drive, opposite Walton Baths, 8.0, Sunday, July 22, Messrs. D. Robinson and W. Parry.

LUMB-IN-ROSSENDALE: 7.30, Friday, July 20, Mr. J. Clayton.

NELSON: 8.0, Tuesday, July 24, Mr. J. Clayton.

NEWCASTLE BRANCH N.S.S. (Socialist Club, Arcade): 3.0, Members' Meeting.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE (Bigg Market): 7.0, Sunday, July 22, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

WATERFOOT: 7.45, Wednesday, July 25, Mr. J. Clayton.

SEAHAM HARBOUR (Church Street): 8.0, Saturday, July 21, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

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