

THE FREETHINKER

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

Views and Opinions

Protestants and Catholics

MORE than once I have had occasion to point out that the persecution which is openly applied is far less harmful to character than the persecution that is covert. Where the law openly says that certain beliefs must not be expressed under pain of punishment or death, a man may keep silent without any feeling of self-degradation. But where the terrorism is disguised or is silently put into operation, where the holding of an opinion that is opposed to the majority is punished by boycott in business, in social life, or in politics, or where it acts as a bar to advancement in any direction, we have a form of coercion to which hardly anyone can submit without a steady undermining of character. Excuses are manufactured to prove, first of all to outsiders, and then to oneself, why it is proper to be silent to avoid "hurting the feelings" of the more orthodox, and then to dull and ultimately to silence the voice of one's better intellectual nature. Introduce a timid nature to an established and respectable lie, and the conditions for a fruitful marriage are there, with the certainty of a fruitful progeny of falsehood and hypocritical pretensions.

It is in the light of what has just been said, that I am criticizing Dr. Cadoux's useful and timely book on *Catholicism and Freedom*. His exposure of Roman Catholic tactics and the danger of the spread of Roman Catholic beliefs cannot be too often impressed on the public mind. But I part company with him in his advocacy of the superstition that Protestantism is essentially more tolerant than Roman Catholicism. The facts here are all against him. And I purpose proving this along two lines of evidence. (1) That Protestantism has persecuted and has been intolerant to the extent of its opportunities; and (2) that intolerance and persecution is not peculiar to her the Roman Church, but has its sanction in the nature of fundamental Christian beliefs, and is deeply rooted in the nature of all religion.

Religion and the Press

Let me take Dr. Cadoux's illustrations of the extent to which the Roman Church influences public opinion through an *underhand* control of the press, and even of publishers, booksellers and newsagents. A chapter of the book under notice is devoted to this, and I must refer readers to it for details. Roman Catholics are manœuvred into key-positions on papers, where they are able to exert an influence in warding off direct criticism of Roman Catholic teachings and claims. Through Roman Catholic customers and advertisers, publishers, booksellers and newsagents are frightened into not publishing or not displaying anti-Roman Catholic works. I use the word "frightened" advisedly, because although the fear of loss of trade is "rationalized" by such phrases as "not giving unnecessary offence," "not wounding people's feelings," "avoidance of offensive language," etc., there is no questioning the fact that it is fear of loss of business that is the main factor here.

Now let us shift this issue to Protestantism, and to this country alone. How many newspapers are there in this country that will permit a straightforward criticism of Christian teaching? Very, very few. This is not because the editors do not agree with what would be said, or that the proprietors are all staunch Christians. I have plenty of knowledge of the fact that there are a good proportion of Freethinkers in both classes. Some years ago, as a consequence of pressure being brought to bear on certain people, I was invited by a Northern paper to join in a symposium on the present state of Christian belief. I did so, and the article set the united clergy of a large part of Lancashire in a quiver. It was originally intended to republish all the articles in book form; but as that would have meant placing my own indictment of Christianity in permanent form, enough religious pressure was brought to bear on the paper to stop that being done. In another discussion in one of the London morning papers, after being driven by my criticism of its sham fight, a well-known Atheist was asked to contribute an article on a future life. This was done, but when the articles appeared in book form the one from the avowed Atheist was omitted. The only difference I can see in this conduct from that of Roman Catholic behaviour is that the Protestant form is more cowardly and more contemptible. To-day there is hardly a paper in the country that would, in the event of a series of opinions being asked about current religion, dare to ask me for an article, although it happens that I have a better right to speak in the name of the Freethought movement in this country, than any other man in Britain.

Dr. Cadoux expects that "widely ramifying Roman Catholic influence will do its best to smother this little book of mine away from public notice.

Booksellers will casually omit to display it in their shop windows, editors will unobtrusively exclude notice of it from their columns." Of course they will, but this is the normal course pursued by Protestants with regard to definitely Freethinking publications. Some twenty years ago I sent the manuscript of one of my books to one of the oldest publishers in Britain. The manuscript was returned, although as I had a public of my own a sale enough to guarantee against loss, at least, was there. On enquiry I learned that although the opinions of the firm's readers were most flattering, the publishers feared the book would "offend many of their patrons." I have never offered a manuscript of mine to a publisher since. Some of my books have been removed from well-established bookseller's windows under threats from parsons and members of the public. Many newsagents are afraid to display the *Freethinker*, because of the boycott that is threatened if they continue to do so. The Christian Science movement habitually threatens booksellers and newspapers when they display books attacking that idiotic money-making form of Protestantism. The B.B.C., says Dr. Cadoux, gives too much publicity to Roman Catholicism, but it gives Freethought none at all, and even in the case of the Bradlaugh Centenary, when it would have been too much to have refused all mention of it, the B.B.C. saved its face—to the unthinking—by having a brief address on Bradlaugh delivered by a very tame heretic. It would have been better done by many a liberal parson. In what sense is Protestantism better than the Roman Church in these matters?

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Religion and Education

Dr. Cadoux writes with deserved strength on the attempts of Roman Catholics to get their schools built and maintained by the State, with Roman Catholics remaining in control, and Protestant teachers excluded from the staff. I agree with all he says; but will Dr. Cadoux say in what respect it is more justifiable to teach Protestant religion in the schools at the expense of the State? Surely there is no difference between paying for Roman Catholicism out of the rates and paying for the religion of Protestants from the same source. It is wrong for Roman Catholic priests to wish to close schools against Protestants. But Dr. Cadoux must know that so far as it can be managed Protestants are playing the same game. In some cases the religious beliefs of candidates, even in Council Schools, are enquired into before appointment; and there are large numbers of teachers who are afraid to let their Freethinking opinions be known lest they should be made to suffer at the hands of their Protestant overseers, and forfeit their chance of promotion. And I feel fairly certain that if Dr. Cadoux attempted to discuss Church history from a Freethinking point of view, he would not remain long at Mansfield College, although it is one of the most liberal of Oxford Colleges.

I quite agree with Dr. Cadoux on the impudence of the Roman Catholic attempt to induce the L.C.C. to alter the history books in use in council schools in the interests of the Roman Church. But in sober truth, are not the school books actually written so as to favour the Protestant view, so far, at least, that no book which told the truth about the English Church, or stated the facts about the Freethinkers of the past century and a half would stand a chance of being admitted. Youths leave even the secondary schools in complete ignorance of the part played by Freethought in the history of the nineteenth century. I question whether in the upper elementary schools there would not be a very vigorous outcry if the theory of evolution were taught to boys and girls with its plainest and simplest impli-

cations. In these directions the ignorance of young men leaving our larger public schools, on such subjects as those touched on, is simply deplorable. They are actually taught Protestant history, and they are taught science—so far as they are taught it—with religious implications that are not offensive to English Protestantism. The trick is accomplished by what is left out, as well as by what is put in.

Dr. Cadoux has a curious reply to the truly comical plea of the Roman Catholics for the King to be relieved of that part of the coronation oath which makes him profess Protestantism, and also against the use made of public displays and processions to advertise Roman Catholic religion. He says that so long as the Church is established "the Christian religion secures recognition from the State," and if the Roman request were granted it might open the throne to a Roman Catholic King. But why not? Why must the King be the only public official who is not permitted to choose his religion, or to go without one if he sees fit? I know that all this professed veneration for the King, the pride with which so many treasure the memory of coming into contact with his consecrated person, the extravagant and foolish laudation of his wisdom, etc., etc., all this has its real roots in the primitive superstitions that belong to the time when the King was responsible for the continuance of the seasons and the good-will of the gods, but why force upon an official in the modern State what may be a gross act of hypocrisy by professing belief in a religion that is officially selected for him before he is born? I would give the King as much freedom as the dustman, and in both cases see that it was used with as much wisdom as possible. I would much like Dr. Cadoux to explain on what grounds the establishment of *his* religion is right, and the establishment of a religion of some one else is wrong. So far as I can see, what emerges is the belief that Catholics cannot trust Protestants to act with justice where religion is concerned, and Protestants cannot trust Catholics to act justly in the same circumstances. I believe that both are quite justified in their suspicion.

One other point out of many. Dr. Cadoux raises an objection to Roman Catholics on the ground of their owing allegiance to a foreign power, and says that in certain circumstances the Roman Catholic will obey the orders of his Church in preference to obeying the laws of this country. Quite so, but are there not large numbers of Protestants who act on the same principle with regard to their churches and their religion. Dr. Cadoux admits this when he says that "No State has a right to take precedence of a sanctified Christian conscience." What is this but the Catholic position stated over again? It must be a Christian conscience—not a Jewish, or a Buddhist, or a Mohammedan, or an Atheistic one. Being Christian makes a great difference.

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Protestants and Publicity

Dr. Cadoux nowhere shows an awareness of the extent to which Protestantism uses the State to advertise itself, even while censuring the attempts of the Roman Church to do so, and detailing the extent to which it has succeeded. He does not recognize the fact that in civic life we have religious ceremony piled on religious ceremony, as a very effective method of advertising the Protestant clergy and their creed. There is even a chaplain, paid by the State, in a secular House of Commons. The Protestant State in England still upholds the priest-made "crime" of blasphemy; Sunday laws still enforce a Protestant Sabbatarianism; Protestant bigotry makes it advisable for hundreds of men to sacrifice their intellectual integrity if they wish to attain the status of public officials. The whole of the community is

still taxed to the extent of an unknown number of millions of pounds by relieving all places of worship of taxation. Dr. Cadoux complains of the disparaging manner in which Dr. Horton, the eminent Non-conformist, was referred to after his death by Catholics, and describes him as one of the "saintliest" of Christians. But it was this "saintly" Christian who said that if a man did not believe in immortality he lowered the tone of life and should be ostracized from human society. And consider the kind of language that has been used by Protestants concerning dead Freethinkers!

My catalogue is not by any means ended, but my space is filled. I agree with Dr. Cadoux that the growth of Roman Catholicism is a threat to freedom and progress. But more catholic than he, I apply his rule to Protestants and find them worthy of the same condemnation. He would like to free the country of Roman Catholicism. I would help him at the task, and would clear out Protestantism while I was about it. For after all they are both forms of Christianity, and Christianity is a form of religion, and religion in all ages has tended to intolerance more or less pronounced. Why is this so? That is the question, the existence of which Dr. Cadoux does not seem to have glimpsed. I will try and answer that question next week.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

(To be continued)

The Power of the Purse-Strings

"The services of the clergy are imaginary, and their payment should be of the same description."

G. W. Foote.

"If every man said what he thought, the existing religion could not subsist a day."—Shelley.

The clergy are not supposed to be business men, and theology seems very remote from commerce. Nevertheless, religion is nothing but a trade, and a sorry one. The clergy are the cleverest showmen the world has seen, because they never lift the curtain. And their show does not suffer so much from the fluctuations of fashion as other public entertainments. The only difference between a theatre and a church, as Mark Twain has pointed out, is that you pay to go in the one and you pay to get out of the other. The clergy have made mendacity one of the fine arts, and they do not in the least object to mixing a little racketeering with their cajolery. For, if members of their audience refuse to subscribe, they become wicked persons, and wickedness imperils the fate of their immortal souls.

Consider, for a few moments, the tyranny of the tithe racket, which has been going on, so far as the Christian Church is concerned, for nearly twenty centuries, and was used still earlier by their equally astute and business-like Pagan predecessors. A "sacred tenth" was levied on agriculture, a basic and fundamental industry. This was claimed by the priests for the Christian "God," if the clergy were Christian, and for the various Pagan "gods" if the priests were themselves Pagan. All these priests were fully aware that they shared the spoils themselves, and yet they continued to levy this most iniquitous and unjust tax for thousands of years. Now, consider the latest development of this racket in this country of ours. The clergy of the Anglican Church, who are the principal offenders, have had to face a related revolt on the part of the long-suffering farmers. Brazen-faced to the end, these priests contend that, as their unjust racket is a long-standing vested interest, they are entitled to be bought out at

so many years' purchase, with the result that the priests get £30,000,000 from the complacent and cowardly Houses of Parliament in settlement of a tax which should never have been imposed at all, and which was an impudent imposture from the beginning.

Indeed, so pleased are these priests with their clever ruse, that they are now manœuvring to obtain similar compensation to the tune of millions for the abolition of coal royalties and ground-rents now enjoyed by them. They foresee the triumph of Democracy in the near future, accompanied by the disestablishment and disendowment of their racketeering organization, and they want to "get going whilst the going is good." From their own narrow financial point of view, these tricks are well worth while, for they run a real risk of being stripped of their ill-gotten gains like the Greek Church in Russia, and the Romish Church in Spain and elsewhere.

These priests have something to be nervous about, for it is interesting to note that the Anglican Church at present holds property to the value of £32,000,000. It has an annual income of £17,000,000, and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners own over 250,000,000 acres of land in England and Wales. It is actually the wealthiest Church in the world. Hence their anxiety for their financial future.

When the crash comes, as come it must, this Church hopes to fold its tents like the Arabs, and as silently steal away with as much money as it can. What the priests fear is not so much disestablishment, as disendowment, the disgorging of their ill-gotten wealth. They might even consent to disestablishment, provided they retained their properties. They might even consent to discard their present Monarchist views, and adopt a Republican or even a Socialist veneer, so long as they were allowed to retain their wealth. They might even order their docile congregations to sing "God Save the People," instead of "God Save the King," in order to keep their treasure. But such a proceeding, whilst highly satisfactory to the Salaried-Sons-of-God, would be a grave disservice to the cause of Democracy.

A coat of whitewash may hide a tiger's stripes, but it still remains a tiger. The motto of the most powerful Christian Church is "Esto Perpetua," and the Anglican Church is but the sedulous ape of Rome in these matters. On the Continent, the Romish Church has ever been the chief enemy of Democracy; whilst in Russia and the Near East, the Greek Church has ever been the harbinger of trouble. The reason is that Kingcraft and Priestcraft are the Siamese Twins of Politics, and the great Christian Churches are, by tradition, Monarchist. If Democracy achieved power in this country, it would find the Anglican Church a most dangerous menace. Its 16,000 priests, and 300 bishops, and their satellites, would at once be well-equipped enemies encamped in Democracy's own ranks. Every priest would be a recruiting sergeant, working for the restoration of his Church's temporal power, and for the final triumph of his cause. These millions of money in the hands of the priests at such a time, and under such conditions, would imperil the very existence of Democracy.

Parliament made this so-called Church of England, and Parliament can unmake it, and put its ill-gotten gains to far more useful purpose than the perpetuation of Medievalism. For that is what this Church stands for. Democracy teaches the equality and fraternity of men. The Church perpetuates caste and class distinction. It offers prayers for individual members of a royal family; it bids men regard its priests as a sacred caste apart. Democracy teaches the equality of the sexes; but this Church regards women as weaker vessels. This Church imitates its

coloured prototypes in savage nations by using prayers for rain and fine weather. And, to crown its barbarity, this Church flames the fires of Hell over a country pretending to some culture and a progressive civilization.

The Anglican Church pretends that its organization has been fruitful in its results. But who has plucked the fruit? This Protestant Church of England has extorted over £1,000,000,000 of money from the farmers of this country, and the Romish priests did even better in the Ages of Faith. Huge sums of money, "beyond the dreams of avarice," have been derived from coal royalties. Think of that for a moment. Nature makes primeval forests; they flower, disappear, settle down. Coal is the result. This process takes millenniums of time, a creative effort that staggers the imagination. To what end is all this effort? It is that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners shall levy two shillings per ton royalty on the coal in order that a lazy priesthood shall have a comfortable existence. And this so-called Church of England is but one out of a hundred sectarian religious bodies in this country, and its abracadabra appeals to only a small percentage of the entire population. Surely, the Coptic Christian priests in Abyssinia never rode over their dark-skinned dupes in more vigorous fashion than Christian priests have ridden over Britons, who, the song says, "never shall be slaves."

Nor is this all; for the ecclesiastical canons are still in force in this country, and the Law courts have decided that they are binding on the clergy. The first dozen canons are aimed directly at unbelievers and dissenters, and all but one end with a curse, a distinguishing mark of vertebrate Christianity. If you deny Royal supremacy in Church affairs you are cursed. If you deny that this Anglican Church teaches the doctrines of Christ you are cursed. If you say that the Prayer Book is out of harmony with the Christian Bible you are accursed. And so on, and so forth, in the true spirit of Christianity throughout the ages. Is it not plain that this Church is an anachronism, a mere survival?

This deliberate teaching that millions of their countrymen are outcast and are to be damned is an affront to human decency and to Democracy. Priests claim to be sacred persons, a caste apart from their fellows. Unless a man accepts them and their abracadabra, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly. Is it not time that such a Church was disestablished and disendowed, and the money devoted to useful purposes?

MIMNERMUS.

Some Champions of the Church

I.

THE real indisputable Champion of Christianity is, of course, Jesus Christ. He is not merely a Champion but a Champion of Champions. He is actually the Champion of everything—that is good, naturally. It is the Devil who is the Champion of Evil and all the works of Evil. The two are constantly having a fight, so to speak, for the soul of Man. Being a sinful being, Man often prefers the Devil and his works, in a most unaccountable way, to the pure simple doctrine of Jesus, much to the disgust of the fervid followers of Christ; with the result that in season and out of season, in books and in churches, Man is exhorted to follow the only genuine Champion the world has ever seen.

But it is here where the difficulty lies. An ordinary

man may emulate another ordinary man; but how is he going to emulate, not an ordinary man, but a God? A God can do no wrong; he is always indisputably right. It is all very well to be asked to follow Jesus, a Champion of Champions, a Champion who is the greatest Wit the world has ever seen, or the greatest Bachelor, or Medium, or Poet, or Orator, or Vegetarian, or Wine-bibber, or Socialist. Being a God, Jesus is naturally all these, and many more things *ad infinitum*. But poor, weak Man has actually no God-like attributes whatever minor poets—in comparison with Jesus—like Shakespeare may say. All a man can do is to be a Man, and even if he becomes a champion Man, he still remains a Man and not a God. In discussing some Champions of the Church, then, I want to point out right away that they are men and not gods; it must not be expected, therefore, that they should be as great Champions as Jesus. He could embrace the lot and all they stood for and then some.

Still, it is necessary to insist that some of my Champions were endowed with the Grace of Jesus. This was a special favour not given to all men, but to a selected few. In the ordinary way, no one would have suspected these men as being really different from other men. But the great point in being endowed with the Grace of Jesus is that the men—and women, for that matter—immediately told the world that they were so endowed. They were consecrated from the beginning, so to speak. And they could pass on this Holy quality to others by the mere laying-on of hands.

Directly a man had the Grace of Jesus—sometimes called the Grace of God—he stood out as something different. He would wear a distinctive dress, and be called a Man of God. In most cases he believed he really was. And if he happened to be a King, he was so by Divine Right, that is by the Grace of the Lord or some similar right. Fortunately for posterity, the history of many of these Kings and Men of God has been preserved; and some of us, who, by some queer kink have never been suitably impressed by the Grace of Jesus, can examine the narratives undisturbed either by promises of Heaven or Hell, those two remarkable places to one of which God condemns hard-hearted and jeering unbelievers.

One of the greatest of all earthly Champions of the Church was undoubtedly Torquemada. It is true that other Champions do not particularly like this great and noble Spaniard, who did so much to champion all that Jesus was said to stand for. Still, there is his record, a record of valiant service and long life devoted to the service of the Church.

He was Father-confessor to Ferdinand and Isabella, those two noble sovereigns who signed the edict for the expulsion of the Jews from Spain. Torquemada became the prime mover in the application of this order as he was also in organizing the Inquisition throughout Spain. In general, other Champions of the Church prefer to leave Torquemada with just these two brief references to his activities, hoping that details will not be asked for. But it is well to remind people for whom Torquemada is but a name—even if a terrible name—that these details are not merely highly interesting as examples of what the Grace of the Lord can do, but also highly significant when applied to a religion which is still being boosted up as the Holiest of Holy.

Torquemada did not, of course, invent the Inquisition. This holy organization had been going on in full swing in France for some time, and already had at its command the rack, the pulley, the thumbscrew, the boot, the machine for crushing the bones of one's legs, the stake, and many other heavenly devices for dealing with heretics, obstinate unbelievers, and all

those people with money suspected of being lukewarm to the Church. Torquemada was utterly sincere; and he had the additional advantage of being resolutely inflexible in his burning desire to endow the people of Spain with such a magnificent ecclesiastical power as the Inquisition.

For eighteen years he reigned supreme with the blessing of Ferdinand and Isabella, and the huzzahs of the faithful. In that period he is said to have sent to the stake, that is, he burnt alive, something like 10,000 people. It is true, of course, that these god-like burnings are not looked upon with very great approval by our eminent Catholics. Mr. Belloc, for example, together with other Catholic historians, claims that the number is more likely to be 2,000. By reducing the number to a fifth, one thus reduces the crime—or rather the Grace—thus making the zeal of Torquemada more in harmony with modern Catholic requirements. 10,000 people, men, women and children—yes, actually children—is a Protestant exaggeration, so we are told. 2,000 men, women and children burnt alive makes it much more holy.

There were at least 100,000 people tortured during that time. Mr. Belloc might reduce the number, say, to 80,000 or even 50,000. But he cannot reduce the torture. The rack, the thumbscrew, the red-hot pincers, and many other playful instruments designed by the Grace of Jesus were all there; and, to the satisfaction of Torquemada, were in constant use. And there were something like 90,000 people thrown into prison—not the prisons of our day, with their central heating, decent sanitation, good food and other amenities of life. The prisons of the Inquisition were, perhaps, the foulest holes ever made by man.

But let us leave Torquemada for the present and come to England two centuries later. Had the Church profited by the advancement of civilization? Or was it the same Holy Roman Catholic Church, unchanged and unchangeable?

The King by Divine Right was then James II. As a very young man he had proved himself a good fighting seaman; he had made himself a good organizer for the Admiralty. But directly he became King of England, his Romanizing zeal became paramount. For rebels like Argyle and Monmouth, who as Protestants, felt a Catholic King was a blot upon the fair face of England, James proved himself a worthy follower of Torquemada.

Argyle was soon betrayed and sentenced to death. But James would have preferred his favourite instrument of torture, that known as the "boot," should first be applied to the legs of the unlucky marquis; and he was indignant that Argyle was executed without this torture. For Monmouth he had no mercy either, and the description given by Macaulay of the execution is sickening in its details. But where James shone is in the treatment he meted out to the rebels after Sedgemoor.

Monmouth's followers were the farm-labourers and peasants in the West of England, and James soon put down the rebellion and executed the leaders. But, impelled by the spirit of Torquemada, he sent down two of the worst human beasts in history, Col. Kirk and Judge Jeffries, to deal with the poor rebels.

I think, in some ways, this is the blackest page in English history, and I simply cannot transcribe the damnable scenes which followed Kirk and Jeffries obeying their Divine Master.

Mr. Belloc has done his best to rehabilitate James II., and it is the fashion every now and then to claim that the accusations against human monsters like Torquemada and James II., are pure exaggerations.

Even Kirk and Judge Jeffries have their apologists. It is almost unbelievable for the facts are there for anyone to investigate.

And there are a few other Champions of the Church I hope briefly to deal with in subsequent articles.

H. CUTNER.

A Plea for a Common Front

(Continued from page 407)

THE mysticism of some modern philosophers is due to the same cause as the mysticism of ancient philosophers—irrationality. And all irrationality goes arm in arm with reaction. Jeans and Eddington represent the bourgeois sense of futility and fear in a world of collapsing bourgeois values—a protest against the emergence of really vital values which are overwhelming their world. Hence the attempt to cut adrift, to deny the real world, to proclaim the spectre as reality—because their world is spectral, because they can express nothing except the dead-end that they are.

And what incredible stuff is this about their spectralism being a protest against Materialist philosophy. Apparently this refers to mechanistic behaviourist theory. But that isn't Materialist! That is a form of neutral-monism, equally an expression of social paralysis with its complement the mystical flapdoodle. What are we to do when such a "progressive" as Huxley can expose himself as simply lacking the first essentials of clear thinking? Is it not evident how important it is that we should teach our scientists to have a little self-respect, to learn Materialist discipline? And is it not evident that we can only force them to face the issues with Dialectical Materialism?

Now, we cannot separate the Churches from the society in which they are so firmly imbedded with so many vested interests. Rationalism has to a certain extent realized this fact. The Rationalist Press Association have published such books as J. M. Robertson's *Dynamics of Religion*; the N.S.S., such books as Alan Handsacre's *The Revenues of Religion* and Chapman Cohen's *Christianity, Slavery and Labour*. These books, and others, cover a large portion of the problem; but they ignore the final point—disestablishment alone will not break Christianity; for Christianity has too many vested interests, it parasitizes on the social body in too many forms. And while it persists with powerful and rich corporations, its influence will persist. Only by creating a form of society in which the roots of parasitism itself are cut, will we destroy the basis from which Christianity replenishes itself spiritually and financially. The two aspects are one. The Churches parasitize on life; and the suffering life turns to them for consolation. The basic problem of destroying Christianity is the problem of destroying parasitism. It is a social problem.

This does not mean that the Rationalist criticism directed at the Churches is useless or not to the point. On the contrary. The criticism is an essential part of the movement against all parasitism; it expresses and intensifies the growing revolt. That revolt is fought on a myriad fronts, at a myriad stages of development. The Rationalist onslaught on credibility and the lies of authority is one of the main battles.

But the culminating war is at hand. We, who are fighting the Infamous Thing, must recognize our allies. We must conserve our strength and demoralize our opponents by achieving the greatest unity possible. That is the theme of my essay here.

When the dialectical concept of movement grips us, we cannot remain merely applying it in "scientific" areas. Since dialectics leave no gap, all knowledge and experience become material for scientific investigation; and naturally we are impelled to analyse what is nearest and dearest to ourselves, our place in society. Here I must pause to protest against the hypostasis of Reason that one sometimes finds among people claiming to be Rationalists. To them reason is as abstract a thing as the idea of God was to the schoolmen. If you hypostasize reason, it ceases to be the vital force of scientific perception; it becomes a mere abstraction derived from a formal system of logic. The Rationalist worshipping the Aristotelean schemata is no more a Freethinker than Thomas Aquinas; and on investigation this type of Rationalist will be found to be politically a reactionary. He is "reasonable" only because he wishes to prove all "disruptive" ideas unreasonable. Some of the criticisms of Freud, for instance, found in the *Literary Guide* are of this type; also the criticisms of all really progressive social analysis.

Rationality is a social product. Language has a social origin, whether in sex or work; and our rationality cannot be separated from language and work. What is rationality? It is the capacity to see relations aright. When mankind began to sort out what effects came from what causes, they began to control nature stably and to be rational. And all that is irrational—religion, metaphysics, etc.—is based on a false association of facts, a par-association often going deep into infantile experience. A dialectical analysis of history—that is, an analysis which seeks to grasp the phenomena of history in their fullness, in their organic truth—will show us that at every point rationality has been determined by the social organization, and that society itself can only be understood in terms of the productive mechanism, the relationship of men at work. As man's power over nature grows, his sense of relationship increases and deepens. By grasping the relationship of cause and effect in nature—and progressively applying this knowledge—and by deepening his sense of kin, his moral sense and his productive powers increase.

There was the great development from the sense of the family group—the Trinity that still so dominates fantasy—to the clan-group; and then from the clan-group to the national group. Next comes the great step to the human universal; and this was probably first made in history in Egypt, under the imperial expansion of the dynasties following the Hyksos. Mastery over nature had proceeded far enough to generate the notion of universal kin, but not far enough to stabilize this notion, to make it fully rational. Hence a portion of the emotion goes into Pharaoh-worship, into the concept of the universal fatherhood of God. The split has occurred in society; classes have definitely broken clan-solidarity; and the social division, which as it increases deepens the self-division of the individual, expresses itself as a wedge cleaving reality into two sections, the world and the beyond-world, the governed and the governing, the created and the creating. As the productive mechanism develops in the zigzag, up and down, ascending-spiral direction that results from the dialectic of history, rationality grows—with lapses as the social mechanism breaks. Each time that rationality appears after the lapse, it is stronger than ever; for the dialectical unity is on a higher level—and this higher level is the new quality of social organization, the new productive technique.

Rationality is thus a concrete awareness of relationship, and includes both the social relation of man to man, and the productive relation of man to nature.

When we abstract Reason and hypostasize it outside social process as a kind of god-given yardstick, we are betraying rationality.

It follows that only in a classless world-society can we stabilize rationality, for only such a society will have reached fully productive mastery and coherence, a perfected sense of kin. Only in such a society can science be fully free.

Therefore, if we are true Rationalists, it is our business to fight for that classless world-society as our first responsibility.

That is the first simple realization that comes to us when we grasp the dialectical concept of movement, when we purge rationality of all abstraction.

Now let us examine the form which the fight takes for us. The form is not an abstract fight of reason against ignorance—for that presupposes the god-given yardstick. The form is the fight of scientific truth (the developing sense of kin and productive technique) against reaction (all that seeks to preserve irrationality by preserving the hidden sources of irrationality: class-distinctions, parasitism).

Since our rationality is not the god-given yardstick but an infinitely precious product of reality, born of our blood and sweat, it is sure to have lots of errors and insufficiencies in it. There is no need to deplore that. Our problem is to advance the struggle. We are not fighting alone. We have life backing us, the forward march of history; but that history is ourselves. Our confidence and our vigilance must be equally balanced.

Let us look at the historical terms in which the struggle reaches us. Rationalism, in its modern form, derived socially from the awakening bourgeois who threw off the feudalist fetters because they were at that time the creative class—lifting the world to a new quality, though at the cost of terrible suffering among the dispossessed peasantry. The line of the great Materialists of the seventeenth and eighteenth century is the line of the bourgeois upthrust, the fight of the industrialists against the feudal remnants of the state and the landed aristocracy. The "rights of the individual" gain a new formulation from the mercantile era and from industrialism. (The issue is complicated by the fact that to the bourgeois claim is added that of the peasant and the growing proletariat, so that all such phrases as the "rights of man" achieve a two-edged value—as the bourgeois find after 1789, when the revolution starts to go too deep; as indeed the English bourgeois found in 1649, when the Levellers started to get noisy.)

But it is the bourgeois idea of "rights" that wins; the proletariat are as yet insufficiently organized because production is as yet insufficiently socialized. The underdog has, however, been awakened; and the bourgeois continually find that they have to resist the full application of their own slogans. But capitalism is still progressive; and there is therefore a progressive section of the bourgeois who favour a wider application—not a full application; that they cannot even conceive. Consequently the fight for Freethinking throughout the nineteenth century is made on a basis of advancing capitalism. Since capitalism is still capable (despite its terrific cruelties) of expanding the mechanism of production, "reformism" is the furthest that anti-capitalist demands can formulate themselves in action; and the Freethinking movement, pressing for the final repudiation of all feudal inheritances, is allied with this reformist movement (which at moments deepens into revolutionism: Chartism, 1848, the Commune).

This relationship continues up till 1914. The Great War, hastening the dissolution of bourgeois values, and tremendously stressing the inner contradictions of capitalism, brings an entirely new rela-

tionship into existence—that of the Socialist State, the U.S.S.R.⁵

⁵ I have no space here to give the Marxist analysis of capitalist contradictions. The genuine enquirer must study Marx, *Capital and Poverty of Philosophy*, with Lenin, *The Teachings of Karl Marx, Imperialism the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, and *The State and Revolution*. For earlier history Engels *The Origin of the Family* must be read.

JACK LINDSAY.

(To be continued)

Acid Drops

The Speaker of the House of Commons says that "humbug" is not a parliamentary expression. We suggest that a Royal Commission should be appointed to consider the matter. It is a shame that the House should be left without a fitting word describing the common characteristic of our leading politicians.

Last Sunday marked the hundredth anniversary of the death of the author of the *Marsellaise*. No one yet has done better than Carlyle, who described it as making men "defiant of death, despots and the devil." Most national anthems are dreary, and our own dreariest of all. When a man sings such an exhibition of egotism and boastfulness as "Rule Britannia," he at least tries to stand up erect and to look a man. But when a man stands to sing "God save the King," there is usually an unconscious droop, he tries to look as unintelligent as if he were in Church, and is obviously pleased when it is all over. One can hardly imagine our national anthem rousing anyone to anything more desperate than a drink.

Says the *Observer*, dealing with the B.B.C.:—

It is not, in safeguarding the public interest, to deal unjustly with loyal dissent.

That is a piece of verbal humbuggery worthy of Mr. Baldwin or Ramsay Macdonald. The only way to deal with dissent is to leave it alone, and trust to the influence of logical criticism to determine its value. Loyal dissent is the kind of dissent that the German, Italian, and British branches of the Fascist movement encourage. It is the kind of dissent that the Roman Catholic Church, and every other Church, has permitted. Loyal dissent permits you to criticize the institution of the monarchy but to insist on the value of the King, to bewail the influence of armies, so long as you praise the value of the military life. Loyal dissent is the kind of thing which permits every man to do as he likes, so long as he does as he is told. It permits independence of opinion with newspaper writers so long as they take from their employers the opinions they express. That sentence from the *Observer* should have a full page in any dictionary of humbug that is written.

On a second glance at the *Observer*, we think this deserves honourable mention:—

Sanctions being in theory a means of preventing or shortening a war, how in common-sense can they apply to a war already finished?

To which one might put a similar query:—

The police being intended to prevent robbery or limiting the degree of injury to the person, why, in common sense should they concern themselves with an aggressor, when an assault is finished and the man who committed the assault is finished and the man who committed the assault has retired—with his victim's watch?

Again the *Daily Express*! Cuthbert Raymond Newton was sentenced, the other day, to five years penal servitude for swindling two elderly maiden ladies of all

they had. The swindler had robbed these ladies of £12,000, their fortune, and the poor women were left starving. But, says the *Express*, these old ladies were kneeling in a private chapel at Plympton St. Maurice, thanking God for the friends he had sent to their assistance. That would mean a few more subscribers to the *Express* from the religious morons for whom the *Express* is obviously catering. God did not warn these old ladies while they were being robbed, but after they were swindled he listened to their prayers and sent friends to their help. Wonderful! What an illustration of the power of prayer! If only the answers displayed a little more intelligence!

The Wood Green Education Committee unanimously recommend that the study of the Bible from its historical and literary aspects should form part of the school curriculum "for the forthcoming school year." If this were not a Christian country, and if we did not know that behind this move is the parson, of all denominations, it might be to the good—certain other considerations taken for granted. But as things are it would be much more educative if, say, the Koran were introduced to the schools in its literary and historical aspects. That would tend at least to broaden the minds of those who listened to the lessons. As it is, the parsonic recommendation which the Wood Green members voice only tends to stereotype ignorance concerning the Bible.

What is meant by the historical aspect of the Bible? Historically the Bible may be studied as a mass of legends that we have inherited, and which were for long accepted as literally true, both as science and history. And the historic influence of the Bible may be shown as encouraging the belief in witchcraft, threatening with death those who believed, or who induced others to believe, in non-biblical gods, and by the way in which the teachings of religion concerning man and nature for centuries stood in the way of the acquisition of scientific knowledge. As T. H. Huxley put it, whichever independent road a scientific man took he soon found a notice exhibited, "No admittance. By Order, Moses." But a teacher who actually dealt with the historic aspects of the Bible would be forced to resign.

As for the literary aspects of the Bible, this, in itself is downright rubbish. As we have pointed out scores of times, the literary beauty of the Bible is the literary beauty of the translators. It is due to them putting the Bible into a language that really does not belong to it, and is due to several generations of polishing and re-polishing during a time when the virility of the English tongue was at its best. Given the same process the Koran would stand out quite as well. Given the same process of toning down of absurdities, introducing meanings that veiled the real significance of what was said, and one might as easily make sense of a sermon by the Bishop of London, clarity out of a speech by Ramsay Macdonald, or philosophy out of an article by James Douglas.

A writer in the *Christian World* explains how it happens that Gandhi has such excellent principles, but does not subscribe to Christian doctrines. The explanation is that if Gandhi has never heard of Jesus Christ he would never be the great spiritually-minded person he is. That is the explanation given by Christians of great Freethinkers, and also of the fact that there are relatively so few Freethinkers in prison. It is because they have been brought up under the influence of Christianity. How curious it is that Christian principles do not so frequently influence for the better those who advertise their acceptance of them!

Another example of the idiot-hunting competition that goes on in the search for an ever-increasing of our newspapers. This time the *Sunday Referee*. The *Referee* also has its tame astrologer, and he gives the horoscope of the baby Prince Edward of Kent, which, says the

magician, is similar to that of the King. The baby will develop an outstanding personality, he will "possess great charm, with a deep sense of responsibility" allied to that mystical appreciation of beauty and religious truth which characterizes all the members of our Royal Family, who are naturally gifted with intuition, that flair for knowing how to act and advise in difficult situations." And all this clotted nonsense reminds us that the pence of fools are as valuable to the *Referee* as those of philosophers, and there are more fools than philosophers about. We particularly like that "mystical appreciation of beauty," and the "intuition" with which the Royal Family are "naturally gifted." We thought all these virtues came in with the consecration service. But what a pity the *Referee* does not restore to the Royal Family the original capacity of Kings to control the weather, and the "natural gift" for curing disease by touching, to say nothing of their being directly descended from the tribal joss. The unfortunate thing is that the wonderful qualities of a Royal Family, from Grandmother to baby are due to their being born under a particular planet, and as they are born when all sorts of planets are in all sorts of "conjunctions," the outstanding virtues of the Royal baby are difficult to account for on astrological lines.

The *Universe* has not yet quite done with its official and authorized statement that unbaptized babies go straight to Hell. It returns to the question once again in its issue of June 12 in reply to more emphatic protests from believing Catholics, and reiterates what it has already said. "Our Lord" distinctly said, "Unless one be born of water and the Holy Ghost one cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven," and it is perfectly ridiculous for any of his pious followers to protest.

One correspondent said, "It is inconceivable that God lets His creatures suffer through no fault of their own," and we are glad to see the *Universe's* splendid reply to such nonsense. "It is true in one sense, but false in another"—with proper insistence on Original Sin and God as a "mighty and jealous God," rightly "visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children." We again repeat there *must* be a Hell, a glorious, fiery, flaming Hell, especially for babies, with a temperature far greater than the sun's—if the Roman Catholic religion be true. We are heart and soul with the *Universe*.

Catholics are in such a hopeless mess over the failure of the Pope to say anything to Mussolini about the Abyssinian War, that it is most amusing to read some of the "apologias." Miss Sheila Kay-Smith, for example, has discovered the Pope in Italy now acted exactly as Jesus did in Palestine 1900 years ago:—

Christ in Palestine, in a situation almost exactly similar to that of the Pope, behaved very much as the Pope is doing. A small nation had been seized and dominated by the Italian power of that day, and everyone expected Him as a Jewish leader to make some pronouncement on the iniquities and cruelties of the conqueror. The silence He maintained was a continual stumbling to his followers and a source of triumph to His enemies . . . the Pope (therefore) cannot be rightly accused of not following his Master's example.

Apart from the fact that Jesus was never a Jewish "leader," except in the sense that, say, Gipsy Smith is an English leader, and certainly no one in authority in Jerusalem cared two hoots for what he said, it was surely the duty of the Pope, as the head of a large religious organization to denounce the iniquitous Abyssinian war, without bothering what Jesus did or did not say. Why even Catholics are sick at heart at his not doing so—or else why all these excuses?

The Church has always looked with alarm at the Cinema, particularly because it has had practically no hand whatever in the development of the "movies." Both the Catholic and Evangelical Churches are trying

and have been trying for some time to poke their noses in; and at last two "senior clergy of Leicester and a leading Free Church minister" invited some "leading" citizens to form a "local cinema council," and see what can be done by the cinema "in the cause of religion, education, recreation, social and moral welfare at home and throughout the Empire." Simple souls such as we are feel this is rather a big job for a few Leicester citizens, and they may find that they have as much influence "throughout the Empire," as the proverbial cat. But the point is that every now and then the clergy are wanting to divert the cinema to their own antiquated ideas of "religion" and science and education. Most of them should go and see Mae West in her "Klondyke Annie" film. Religion is treated there—but perhaps not exactly as the pious would wish.

The Dean of Durham has discovered that Thomas Arnold was a man of "great courage," because of his "pointing the way to a sound treatment of Scripture, and in particular of the prophecies therein contained." It seems that, before Arnold paved the way, the "prevailing view" was that in the Bible "it is impossible even to imagine a failure either in judgment or integrity." Arnold would have none of this. Prophecy, for example, "was not an anticipation of history, but a spiritual utterance in which the element of conscious prediction is very small." In other words, prophecy, which used to be the great stand-by of the truth of the Bible, was recognized by Arnold—and now by Dr. Alington—to be mostly, if not altogether, nonsense.

But would the Dean have us believe that Arnold came to this conclusion entirely as the result of his own thinking? Has Dr. Alington never heard of the Deists in England, and the Atheists in France, of the eighteenth century? Does he suppose, if he is ignorant himself of their work, that Arnold had never heard of Annet, Woolston, and Paine, of Diderot and d'Holbach? Whatever criticism of the Bible "courageous" pioneers in the Church like Arnold made, it was due entirely to the genuine pioneer work of the early Freethinkers who had to face obliquy, starvation, imprisonment, and death at the hands of the Church, and whose conclusions are now generally accepted by Dr. Alington and his fellow believers as commonplaces of Biblical criticism.

The Dean of Durham adds a note to his eulogy of Thomas Arnold worth recording. Arnold "wished to see a truly national Church open to all who were prepared to worship Christ with the very minimum of doctrinal test." For this he was violently attacked by the sweet and lowly brethren who were leading the Oxford Movement. "It is painful," says Dr. Alington, "to recall the harsh words written and spoken by both sides in this particular controversy." The angelic J. H. Newman seems to have been roused to bitter attacks on his Christian brother, who replied by accusing his opponents of "moral wickedness, mingled fraud and baseness, changing sense into silliness, and holiness of life into formality and hypocrisy"—which seems true, anyway, for all types of Christianity. But what a refreshing sidelight on the gentleness and loveliness of true Christians!

The "Sins against the Faith," are now formulated for our instruction—and amusement—by the Catholic *Universe*. They are "false, religious, wilful doubt, disbelief or denial of any article of Faith, and culpable ignorance of any doctrines of the Church." We are pleased to plead guilty to some of these horrible "sins." But we really must protest against the idea that, in contradiction to "false religions," there is one true religion. All religions are false. They are all based on human stupidity, credulity, ignorance, and fear. The silliest nonsense of all is the "fear of the Lord," which is a distinguishing feature of all religions; and it is gratifying to note that, slowly but surely, this particular "fear" is being laughed out of existence.

The "Freethinker" Circulation Drive

It is too early yet to say how far success will crown our efforts to secure for the *Freethinker* a substantial rise in circulation. But that it will meet with *some* measure of success is clear from the batch of letters I have received. The great consideration here is that I am asking our friends to *do* something, not so much to give as to do. And that makes a difference. If I were to ask for a thousand of our readers to give a sovereign each to help the *Freethinker*, I daresay I should get it within a month. But when one asks a thousand readers to put in a little *work*, well, that, as I have said, is different.

My reason for asking for a very slight amount of work, is that if the plan is carried out it will have a "snowball" effect. New readers mean more readers, and more readers mean not merely greater influence, but also the chances of the new ones getting others.

As Swift intended to say:—

As little fleas have lesser fleas upon their backs that bite 'em,
So new subscribers lead to more, and so *ad infinitum*.

The *Freethinker* has always lived upon this kind of personal advertisement; all I am now asking is for its systematic extension.

I have had a great number of letters, and only one comes from an old reader, Mr. J. Humphries, who says:—

Instead of each reader purchasing two copies of the *Freethinker* each week, why not raise the price to sixpence?

Readers will pay that amount, and still receive full value for money.

We know quite well that a very large number of our readers would pay sixpence rather than miss their copy. But the *Freethinker* does not exist merely to pay, or even to interest a select body of readers. It is a missionary effort, with which profit is secondary to propaganda, and by raising its price, while that might relieve me of financial anxieties, it would limit the extent of its operations. And I am not asking readers merely to take an extra copy weekly, but to do so until they have found a new subscriber, and until they do find one to regard the threepence per week as a fine they are inflicting on themselves for their failure. Finally, there are enough intelligent people who would like the *Freethinker* if it were brought to their notice by a friend.

Mr. D. C. Drummond sends along a year's subscription for the paper to be sent to a particular "victim," and thinks that our "unselfish appeal" ought to receive a very wide response.

Another reader, Mr. A. Hanson, sends subscriptions for two people he has marked down. And Mr. H. Jenkins writes that he intends getting more than a single subscriber. More power to his elbow. Mr. Sandys is apparently entering into a friendly competition with his wife, since they are each taking a copy for the same purpose. Mr. E. Henderson is at work already, and thinks what each one can do is a very small return for the work done by the editor of the *Freethinker*. We have a friendly complaint from Mr. F. Goodwin, who was hoping to see the testimonial taking a personal form. Well, call this a personal form, and it will give greater personal satisfaction, if it succeeds, than anything else can. Dr. Har Dayal also orders two extra copies to be used as bait for those who are likely to "bite." A very

old friend, Mr. A. D. Corrick, is doing his bit, and orders another copy for distribution.

These are samples from bulk, and I must content myself with merely thanking the rest who have written for the trouble they have taken. And I am quite sure that there are enough potential readers just "round the corner" if only our friends will look for them. I must also thank those who have not written, but have just got on quietly with their man- and woman-hunt. Perhaps they will write me when they have a success to record. I shall be pleased to hear from them, and also to attend to any suggestions they may make. A complete list of those who have decided to take a hand in this scheme would make a "Roll of Honour" I should be proud to possess.

One useful suggestion has reached me. It may be that in some recent issue of the *Freethinker* an article has appeared which would attract attention of certain persons. In that case, if friends will write the business manager telling him which issue they would like to have, some of them will be sent on free.

I achieve another birthday commemoration on September first. I am asking for a special birthday present.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

THE FREETHINKER

FOUNDED BY G. W. FOOTE

61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4

Telephone No.: CENTRAL 2,412.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

FOR Advertising and Distributing the *Freethinker*.—E. A. Macdonald, 42s.; F. Goodwin, 20s.; "Forward," 15s.

W. BAMFORTH.—Congratulations on your success in getting the *Freethinker* into the Dewsbury Free Library. We hope that it will be well used and thus show that there is a real interest taken in the subjects with which it deals.

Dr. J. D. TAYLOR (Orleans, U.S.A.).—We have very pleasant recollections of your visit to London, and hope to meet you again. We are rapidly getting back to our old form, and are taking as much rest as we can during the summer months.

S. NEWTON.—We have not forgotten our promise to deal with Mr. Carpenter's letter on death. But other things have had to occupy our space, and while we all have to wait for death, death can always wait for us. Some things have to be dealt with at once or not at all.

R. LEWIS.—Very pleased to learn of your friend's interest in our work. Thanks also for your own interest in the paper.

H.B.F.—Capital! Thanks. Next week

W. ROGERS.—We are not publishing letters on the subject at present.

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 offices of the National Secular Society and the Secular Society Limited, are now at 68 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. Telephone: Central 1367.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sugar Plums

Everyone with brains and wit admires the telling work of that great cartoonist, Low. He is independent in his telling cartoons, which are not merely great as cartoons, but also as exhibiting a wit that none other in this country possesses. And he is as ready to expose the absurdities of that generally absurd figure, Lord Beaverbrook, as he is to caricature other people. The significance of the last statement is, of course, that Beaverbrook is the proprietor of the paper in which Low's cartoons appear. And nowadays newspaper proprietors buy the writers as well as their work.

It is this that gives peculiar force to the notices we have seen of Low's new book, *Low's Political Parade*. Three of the four notices we have seen of the book refer to it as illustrating one of the "curiosities of journalism." The curiosity is that a man should be permitted to satirize both the appearance and the views of his "proprietor" (the word is taken from the *Observer*) in his own paper. If anything was needed to demonstrate the decadence of modern journalism, it is here. And it is written by "one who knows." A journalist writes what he is paid to write. What his own opinions are does not matter a bit. He is a mere phonograph, praising this thing to-day and damning it to-morrow. The only latitude he has on a paper is that of inventing some new "stunt" by which to exploit the ignorance of the largest number. We have often been told what we might have earned as a "journalist." We have generally replied that matches can still be sold in the gutter, and some things at street corners; and, at any rate, there are other ways of getting a dishonest living than writing for newspapers. Now it is proclaimed as a "curiosity of journalism" that a man should be permitted to criticize his proprietor's opinions in that proprietor's own paper!

The *Political Parade* says more in its cartoons than many a writer on sociology does in a volume. And there is a subtlety and a breadth about these cartoons which no other cartoonist in the country possesses. Generally the cartoonist depends upon that kind of wit which can appreciate emptying a bag of flour on a man's head, or that which is exhibited by our university students when they arrange for a fight with bags of soot and flour. Their sense of humour rises to that as most children do to a Guy Fawkes parade. Low goes deeper. His cartoons are not newspaperish, they are not national. They are just human, profound because they are so simple, and simple because they are profound—that is, to everyone but a fool. And to a fool a thing is profound only when he cannot understand it, and simple only when it is wrong and unutterably stupid.

We hope we shall not be accused of egotism in quoting the following from a South African reader, Mr. E. A. Macdonald:—

The local Freethinkers were deeply concerned over your illness. It was so unlike you that we felt there must be a mistake. However, you weathered the grave ordeal, quite unlike the average invalid of nearly seventy years. Your bedside jottings, in their range of human interest and intellectual liveliness, were those of a philosopher in the flush of health and gaiety, rather than a

man half-way into the shadows. A great example to the rest of us in a similar situation. Nevertheless, I think you are due your meed of what Gibbon called "autumnal felicity," and such useful recreation as your faculties demand, retaining your connexion with the *Freethinker*, but leaving such duties as involve physical strain to other hands.

We have already promised not to offend again, if we can avoid it. As to "autumnal felicity," we have indicated a way in which readers can give us the supreme pleasure of placing the *Freethinker* in a position such as no Freethought paper in this country has ever held. Meanwhile, we can assure our friends in South Africa that we are rapidly regaining our physical health. As to our mental health, they must judge that for themselves.

The General Secretary of the N.S.S. will be on vacation from July 16 until the 30th, and only matters of pressing importance will be dealt with during that period. All items which can be sent to the office for attention before that date should be forwarded without delay.

At the invitation of the Walthamstow Friends' Fellowship, Mr. George Bedborough delivered a lecture at the Educational Settlement in Greenleaf Road. It was an act of intellectual hospitality to ask one of our speakers to expound the "Case for Secularism." Mr. Bedborough was listened to with courtesy and interest in his defence of Materialism and opposition to all the items of the Christian creeds. Many questions followed and the Chairman concluded by expressing his appreciation at having so stimulating an address.

Italian Philosophy

IN modern times philosophy in Italy has been almost exclusively Hegelian in character. And because it has shared Hegel's antagonism to doctrinal religion it has been the one factor tending to undermine Catholic culture in the centres of learning.

Two names are associated with this period of Italian thought, and the mantle of Croce has fallen on his younger disciple, Prof. Giovanni Gentile. The chief stimulus has probably come from the four volumes of *Filosofia dello Spirito*, by ex-Senator Benedetto Croce. A neo-Hegelian idealist, he is dissatisfied with Hegel's dialectic (see his *What is Living and What is Dead in Hegel's Philosophy*), for in his own system imagination and art do not follow, but precede, philosophical concepts. What is primary is intuition, or "rudimentary art," on which are based the intellectual activities of logic and arrangement. In Vico's theory, which Croce adopts, intuition is a law unto itself, and does not even depend on such aid as posited by the Kantian categories, which would provide it with logical form.

The basis of reality, for Croce, is *spirito*, which H. W. Carr, in his translation, renders "mind." "An infinite possibility overflowing into infinite actuality, it has drawn and is drawing at every moment cosmos out of chaos, has collected the diffused life into the concentrated life of the organism, has effected the transition from animal to human life, and is creating modes of life even more lofty. The work of the spirit is never completed, nor ever will be so. . . . The plant dreams of the animal, the animal of man, and man of superman." (Croce, *Filosofia dello Spirito*).

Philosophy is presented by him as the science of mind in its essence and in its historical development, change being of its essence. As Croce professes no metaphysic, regarding it as a mere refuge from ap-

pearance, mind is not an underlying principle, but reality manifesting itself in activity. There is no object which is not mind, no data confronting mind, but every form which reality assumes is grounded in mind's activity. Our experience exists alone, and mind is the sole reality, creative of its own objects. Instead of speaking of an external something we should speak of the data furnished by mind to itself. What is born of orderly mind, however, cannot help taking on a determined form, and so we get our notion of causality.

Croce divides his exposition into four sections, Aesthetic, Logic, Practice and History. Aesthetic is the science of expression, dealing with intuitions. These, which have been called sense-experiences, are produced by mind, solely by forming or expressing them. They do not relate to anything "out there," but are engendered from within. "Intuition is expression . . . but in expressing itself by intuiting phenomena the mind is creative, and therefore doing at the first stage what is done on a grander scale by the artist." "The artist does not believe or disbelieve his images; he produces them." Every man is an artist, giving shape in his imagination to an external world. This rudimentary self-expression is fundamentally of the same nature as that which appears with greater intensity in the work of the artist. Art belongs to and is derived from the lowest grade of mind, and pertains to its internal activity. It does not work on any independent external material. "At the lowest limit is the sensation, the unformed matter, which the mind can never grasp in itself." This matter to which the mind is passive is only a conceptual limit, posited for the intuition because there is none in reality. (This would seem to remove Carr's objection that Croce after all is guilty of positing a Kantian Thing-in-itself).

Secondly, Logic is the science of the Pure Concept. Though art, as intuition, is the most immediate form of knowledge, it cannot satisfy the cognitive need. "Knowledge has two forms. It is either intuitive knowledge or logical knowledge, knowledge we acquire by imagination, or knowledge we acquire by intellect, knowledge of the individual or knowledge of the universal; knowledge is, in brief, either productive of images or productive of concepts." Imagination makes every man an artist, but thought, intellect, follows and makes every man a philosopher—because he is already an artist. Here we have actually the reversal of Hegel's order.

We relate our intuitions and so reach our concepts. Concepts are essentially inexhaustible. Thus "rose" is not a concept, for there are a limited number of them in existence. Beauty is a concept. It is expressing the form given by mind to its intuitions, and not inherent in an "object." Ugliness is spoilt expression. Standing against beauty, the unity of the opposition gives in synthesis the concept of beauty as worth achievement, unlike ugliness.

The third domain of Practice is exemplified by economics and ethics. The first two moments, or stages, in the process are intuition (art) and concept (logic). But volition follows upon knowledge. "With the theoretical form man understands things; with the practical he comes to change them. With the first he appropriates the universe; with the second he creates it."

Finally, History is the science dealing with mind in its development, giving a chronicle of human purpose.

There is no place for religion in Croce's system. He sees it as an immature form of philosophy, an imperfect attempt to present reality. It personifies its concepts, giving idols which philosophy later dissolves. God and immortality he finds unthinkable.

God is a myth, religion hybrid mythology. Any doubt as to the existence of the devil, moreover, touches God, who, knowing everything and not being known by anybody, becomes "an individual who is not an individual, an individual undifferentiated, unlimited, abstract, an imaginary being." (Croce, *The Conduct of Life*). To those who aver that religion gives a fortitude and peace of mind not found in philosophy, he replies that such is not his own experience. Further, the heavenly beatitude of the religious dehumanizes earthly affections and therefore excludes and precludes them, and as for spirits absorbed in worship, "We do not want an angel in exchange for a roguish child; we desire the lovely form we embraced in life, not lips that may not be kissed" (*ib.*). He regards the Christian heaven as a haven of refuge, an imaginative distortion: let us rather escape from life's turmoil by art and thought. Philosophy substitutes action—values for thing-values (idols).

It will be seen that Croce's philosophy is not immune from the usual objections to idealism, and from the damaging criticism of practising psychologists. Nevertheless it is good that he has been deemed worthy of attention by English thinkers. The late Bernard Bosanquet was an enthusiastic correspondent. Wildon Carr objected that Croce's analysis of externality does not show how it comes to make *individual* experience, after the manner of Carr's own monadism. C. C. J. Webb naturally objects to Croce's treatment of religion, while Joad considers both Croce and Gentile failed where orthodox Hegelianism succeeded, in escaping from solipsism. At home, Croce has been severely criticized by Prof. Crespi (*Contemporary Thought in Italy*), while Gentile has sought to remedy the defects in Croce's scheme by his "Actual Idealism," presented in his *Theory of Mind as Pure Act*.

He seeks a solution to Croce's dilemma; if spirit is a unity, how can it account for the multiplicity of individuals? But if these are given and not engendered, how can we still call spirit, or mind, a unity? Obviously the individuals must be engendered from, posited by, spirit, and must also be resolved back into it at death.

Departing still further from Hegel, Gentile abandons Croce's "grades" and "moments." Mind is at once act, freedom (nothing also limiting or standing against it), history, and (in awareness of its history and nature), philosophy. "Reality is spiritual; in self-creating it creates will; equally it creates intellect," for intellect is tied to will. Intellectual knowledge is *for* willing. Knowledge is made; willed action is *to be* made. Mind is the universe, experience the free author of all.

The Berkeleyan God is also unnecessary, for thereby "we reproduce in the case of human thinking the same situation as that in which mind is confronted with matter," making our minds automatic in the sense that they only do what their thinker, God, makes them do, a situation which annihilates thought and so refutes itself. We are to God as matter is to us in the naturalistic scheme. Berkeley's universe is complete and static; it cannot grow, as Hegel's grows. If, then, we abandon Berkeley's God, how are we to account for the past and for that which does not immediately confront mind? Gentile's ingenious solution is that the past and the remote, that which is either in time or space removed from perception by minds, is "fossilized" thought, thought which has once been experienced by mind and is now preserved in a fossilized state. Nature is therefore "the eternal past of our eternal present." Whatever reality it possesses is conferred upon it by an act of thinking. It does not merely exist for, it is actually posited by, a subject. It does not precede the

"I," as orthodox Hegelianism would make it do; it presupposes the "I."

Here, where Gentile's system is intended to display its main strength, it is perhaps at its weakest. As he has already dispensed with the Berkeleyan God, he is left with no mind at all whose function it should be to have ejected the remote past and the remote present, no subject from which they could be left as a legacy to later subjects, for he has not demonstrated any spirit unity which transcends its multitude of individuals, and has not even supposed any part of such spirit as being without a body of its own, and therefore perchance mysteriously present before the evolution of living bodies. What he leaves us with is fossilized thought which never had a thinker.

In Gentile's system, while science has merely to assume the object, philosophy must prove the object's value. Exaltation of the object gives religion; of the subject, art. In religion mind discovers itself as object, and if we are to retain the term God, it might stand for objective mind. As such, God is the concept of our own immortality, which belongs to mind in its universality, and not to individual minds. Each particular "I" dies, while the transcendent unity which embraces all "I's" is immortal. In the fulfilment of its nature it makes progress or history, the two being synonymous, for "there cannot be development without amelioration."

G. H. TAYLOR.

Things Worth Knowing*

XLVI.

"GOD'S HAND" IN NATURE

It would be a difficult matter to find the author who, writing of the human forearm and the human hand, has not seen in them the very highest and the most perfect development of the fore-limb found anywhere in the animal kingdom. It has long been customary to lavish praise upon this culmination of human perfections, or climax of evolutionary advances, as writers of different periods have judged it. The divine plan was most surely to be seen in the human hand, that most wonderful of specially designed members. "The Construction of the Hand of Man," was especially chosen by the trustees of the Earl of Bridgewater as a subject in the expounding of which an apt writer could find outlet for almost inexhaustible eulogics, and for countless examples of perfection of design. . . . Those modern authors who have seen so much in the so-called "attainment of the erect position," have been specially lavish in their praise of the human hand as a mere anatomical structure. Dr. Munroe in his Presidential Address at the British Association in 1893 permitted himself the expression that the human hand is "the most complete and most perfect mechanical organ Nature has yet produced." Such a statement on the part of an anatomist can only be attributed to enthusiasm, and to a failure to differentiate between the very primitive anatomical condition of the hand and the perfection of this simple mechanism when linked to a human brain. Even John Goodsir was more moderate, for he claimed no more than that "the Human is the only perfect or complete hand."

* Under this heading we purpose printing, weekly, a series of definite statements, taken from authoritative works, on specific subjects. They will supply instructive comments on aspects of special subjects, and will be useful, not merely in themselves, but also as a guide to works that are worth closer study.

The hand, with its multitude of uses, its better suiting to human purposes than such a thing as a hoof or a paw, its apparent complexity and perfection of movement, was a thing so easily turned to as affording evidence of design—and by design was meant a special and divine planning. . . . After 1859 the forearm and hand, in common with every other feature of the human body, came to be regarded, not as a wonderful and specially designed structure, but as the perfected products of accumulated evolution—the last thing in animal development and specialization. It is no overstatement of the case to say that Man was regarded by many as the last thing made, the culmination of evolution, and for some opponents of the new teaching and for some of its supporters he was the most modern animal. The orthodox Chronology was accepted, the "highest" form was the last form made, but instead of being the highest creation, he was the latest evolution. . . . But though the statement of the idea as expressed by Mr. Gladstone may have been very crude, and its demolition easy by such powers of argument as were Huxley's, still, in mere subtle guise the same idea becomes presented under many forms even to-day, and this not by any means necessarily from opponents of evolution; in such forms its refutation is not always easy. . . . There is a vague idea, which insinuates itself in many ways, that the human type of structure must be derived from, and have passed through stages seen in a series of "lower" animals. A foolish argument may be permitted in dealing with a folly. Were a horse capable of writing works on comparative anatomy, he would probably, and with far more justice, regard his race as being the last effort in evolutionary chronology, and he would, and again with far more justice, derive his highly specialized limbs from those of some such primitive form as Man. . . .

In these hypothetical works, there is no doubt that the human fore-limb would suffer badly. Far from being regarded as the acme of evolutionary processes, it would be judged as an extraordinary survival of a very primitive feature far into the mammalian series, and more would be written on its striking similarity to the corresponding member in the salamander and the tortoise than of its adaptation to the multitude of human functions. . . . I have brought the subject forward in this way of set purpose, for as unbiassed judges of ourselves we do not care to say definitely one way or the other. Is the arrangement of bones and muscles we have seen in the human arm a gradually elaborated evolutionary perfection, or is it merely a retention of a condition so primitive that it is matched only among its immediate kin, and by types situated in the vertebrate stock right at the point of mammalian divergence? In anatomical terms we may say, have we lost a primitive arrangement of bones and muscles, or have we simply retained them comparatively unaltered from the dawn of mammalian specialization? We must not overlook in this the gravity of the second alternative, for it carries with it the assumption that the human stock began to be differentiated when the mammals themselves were evolved from some possible Theomorphic ancestor. With all the evidence that is available I cannot see how it is possible to avoid this second conclusion. In bones, and in muscles, the human fore-limb is far more like that of a tortoise than it is like that of a horse or a dog. This is no fanciful way of stating the case, nor is it going one whit further than the ordinarily gross facts of demonstrable anatomy warrant. Could we imagine an isolated human arm to be the only relic extant of the human race, and were this arm to be dissected by some superanatomist, he would find the

arrangement of its skeletal and muscular elements matched very nearly in the Giant Apes and Old World Monkeys, in some of the lowest Lemurs, and some primitive insectivora, as well as in the more unspecialized Reptiles, and some Amphibians; but he would search in vain for its like among the remaining mammalian groups.

Arboreal Man, by F. WOOD JONES
(Professor of Anatomy, London University) pp. 43-7.

Clocks in Heaven?

SOME considerable time ago, the present writer ventured to comment upon certain wonderful answers to prayers for money, reported by Mr. Hugh Redwood, in an article headed, "Is there Money in Heaven?" Neither Mr. Redwood nor any of his pious friends took any notice of that article. But the question raised by it is really a vital one, because where one's treasure is there will one's heart be also. Of course it is to be conceded that "treasure" may not in every instance signify money. But in the estimation of the churches themselves little can be done without it. The collections must go with the Collects; and there are weekly appeals to the purses of the faithful who respond with wonderful regularity. As the enthusiastic believer says:—

Take my silver and my gold,
Not a jot would I withhold.

Still, although that is the self-denying sentiment there is scarcely any believer, however enthusiastic for his faith, who does not wisely retain a considerable amount of money (if he is lucky enough to possess it) for his mundane needs, and against possible risks and contingencies.

But the main point the writer desired to press home, was that proofs (even in Scripture) are available to justify the Freethinker's assertion that, after all the Christian's suppositions, Heaven is really a clean copy or fair engrossment of the present Earth with the features of the latter, objectionable to Ecclesiasticism, eliminated. Only there seems to be a failure to maintain a proper distinction between Time and Eternity. For example we read this sentence in Holy Writ: "There was silence in Heaven for the space of half an hour." In the Christian's eternal Home there can be no place for divisions of Time in seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months and years such as we have, and find convenient, on Earth. Yet if the Scriptural record be authentic, and the above quotation be accepted as true there is evidently in Eternity a continuation of divisions of Time; and one may therefore conclude that chronometers are in use in the Better Land of Pure Delight where saints immortal reign. It may require some revision of our conceptions of the Almighty Father who would, of course, himself have to be provided with a reliable time-keeper—naturally a massive watch of pure gold—jewelled in every hole—to be in keeping with the array of golden ornaments and precious stones with which Heaven is said to be studded. And the dear old Almighty dad we may picture as an obese and prosperous Jew wearing across his ample front a magnificent gold chain attached to his unerring chronometer.

Does any one suggest that this is flippancy?

There is no ground for any such suggestion. There can be no doubt that the question which forms the heading of this article has a profound theological significance. It is, of course, understood that the aver-

age Christian with his great spiritual knowledge and equipment, stigmatizes the Freethinker as shallow-minded and irreverent. Well, if I were incapable of reverence for the noble *human* figures of history, and those whom I have encountered, I would cease to put pen to paper. I do not devote *my* reverence to unknown and conjectural supernatural beings. I have a great respect for many of the distinguished clock and watch makers whom this despised earth has produced, and one might with satisfaction contemplate the possibility of their continuing their horological activities in Heaven—or the other place—as their respective destinies may be arranged. Whatever happens, it is to be hoped that any clocks in the future life will be attuned to soft low musical sounds; and that the sharp, rasping metallic shrieks to which we here at present often listen will be stilled for ever.

The suggestion that there will be clocks in Heaven furnishes a seed of hope of immortality for our clock makers. They will not like pious doctors, pious lawyers, pious stockbrokers and other pious professional gentlemen have to abandon their customary jobs and change into harpists or plain members of the Heavenly Choir. No, they will be in a position to continue in their fascinating occupation and make beautiful clocks for the mansions above occupied by the principal saints. Like the never-to-be-suppressed clergy they will maintain their distinctiveness on the evergreen shore. Indeed, if they are sufficiently energetic and ingenious they may supplant the preaching fellows in divine favour, for a beautiful, sweet-chiming clock is a thing of beauty and a joy for ever. God has certainly had to listen for a very long period to the lucubrations and orisons of thousands of priests and parsons. A pleasant change may at length be welcomed by God as well as man!

And one may suppose that matters will be so well arranged in the hereafter that canvassers and hawkers will not be allowed to break the peace of the Elect. God surely will see to that. The saint who is taking his well-earned constitutional between choir practices will, we feel certain, not be pestered by itinerant individuals with the solicitation: "Will you buy a watch?"

IGNOTUS.

Correspondence

DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER"

SIR,—I am much interested in the series of articles which Mr. Jack Lindsay has begun.

I do not desire to criticize any points in his articles, at this early stage. The first sentence in the first article, however, is inaccurate, and calls for correction. "I have been surprised from time to time to find in the *Freethinker* jeers directed at Dialectical Materialism, yet not a single voice raised in *informed* protest."

In the *Freethinker* for August 19, September 2, and 9, 1934, G. H. Taylor gave a very clear exposition of Hegelianism and of "Dialectical Materialism": at least it was as clear as anyone could write on such a weird subject as Hegelianism. Neither jeer nor joke can be found in them; and anyone interested, should find them an efficient introduction.

Then in *Freethinker* October 14, 1934, Chapman Cohen wrote, "Chasing Shadows," which has a bearing on one aspect of "Dialectical Materialism." And, in *Freethinker*, October 21, 1934, p. 670, G. H. Taylor, in paragraph 4 of his letter, puts his pen-point through one of the vital claims made for "Dialectical Materialism."

I do not write this to begin criticism; but merely—as a matter of fair-play—to correct an unfortunate mistake.

ATHOS ZENOO.

[The editor will probably comment on Mr. Lindsay's articles when the series is finished.—Ed., *Freethinker*.]

National Secular Society

REPORT OF EXECUTIVE MEETING HELD JUNE 25, 1936

THE President, Mr. Chapman Cohen, in the chair.

Also present: Messrs. Quinton, Clifton, Saphin, Tuson, Silvester, Preece, Sandys, Mrs. Quinton, Junr., Mrs. Grant, and the Secretary.

Minutes of previous meeting read and accepted. The monthly Financial Statement presented. New members admitted to West Ham, North London, South London, West London, and the Parent Society. Further enquiries into a reported police interference with N.S.S. meeting at North London were ordered to be made.

Correspondence from Edinburgh, Birkenhead, National Peace Council, International Peace Campaign, International Union of Freethought Societies, Chiswick, were dealt with, and lecture reports from Messrs. Brighton, Clayton, and Whitehead noted. Motions remitted from the Conference were before the meeting, and the Secretary received instructions concerning them. Messrs. Rosetti (A. C.), Clifton, Mrs. Quinton, Junr., and Miss Kough were elected as the Benevolent Fund Committee. Messrs. McLaren, Sandys, Elstob, and Mrs. Grant were co-opted upon the Executive. The Executive expressed its regret at the death of Mr. G. F. H. McCluskey, one of the Trustees of the N.S.S., recorded its appreciation of his valuable and life-long service to the Freethought cause, and instructed the Secretary to convey the Executive's sincere sympathy to the widow.

It was agreed that no meeting of the Executive be called for July.

The meeting then closed.

R. H. ROSETTI,

General Secretary.

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SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1): Moritz J. Bonn, D.Sc.—"Peaceful Change."

OUTDOOR

BETHNAL GREEN AND HACKNEY BRANCH N.S.S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand): 6.30, Mrs. E. Grout.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (White Stone Pond, Hampstead): 11.30, Mr. Tuson. Highbury Corner, 8.0, Mr. Leacey. South Hill Park, Hampstead, 8.0, Monday, July 6, Mr. Ebury.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Brockwell Park): 6.30, Mr. F. P. Corrigan. Rushcroft Road, opposite Brixton Town Hall, 8.0, Tuesday, July 7, Mr. C. Tuson. Cock Pond, Clapham Old Town, 8.0, Friday, July 10, Mr. L. Ebury.

WEST HAM BRANCH.—Outing to Bookham. Train leaves Victoria Station at 10 a.m., excursion fare 2s. 5d. return. Lunch to be carried, but tea will be arranged.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 3.30, Sunday, Messrs. Bryant, Wood, Evans and Tuson. 6.30, Messrs. Hyatt, Bryant, Wood, Evans, Tuson and Lacey. Wednesday, 7.30, Messrs. Wood, Bryant and Tuson. Thursday, 7.30, Mr. E. Wood. Friday, 7.30, Mr. A. Leacy and others. *Freethinker* on sale at Kiosk. Should be ordered in advance to avoid disappointment.

COUNTRY

OUTDOOR.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N.S.S.—Annual Outing, by train to Weston-Super-Mare. Train leaves New Street Station at 10.45 a.m. Fare 6s., and Saloon has been reserved for party.

BLYTH (Market): 7.0, Monday, July 6, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

CHESTER-LE-STREET (The Bridge): 8.0, Friday, July 3, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY (Albert Road): 8.0, Thursday, July 2. Albert Road, 8.0, Friday, July 3. Edinburgh, The Mound, 8.0, Saturday, July 4. Grant Street, 8.0, Sunday, July 5. Paisley, 8.0, Monday, July 6. Edinburgh, 8.0, Tuesday, July 7. Albert Road, 8.0, Wednesday, July 8. Paisley, 8.0, Thursday, July 9. Albert Road, 8.0, Friday, July 10. Mr. G. Whitehead will speak at each of these meetings.

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N.S.S. (Queen's Drive, opposite Walton Baths): 8.0, A Lecture. St. James Mount, Liverpool, 8.0, Wednesday, A Lecture.

MANCHESTER BRANCH N.S.S. (Platt Fields): 3.0 and 7.0. W. Atkinson (Manchester)—"Public Enemies No. 1."

PRESTON BRANCH N.S.S. (Market Place): 7.0, Mr. J. V. Shortt (Liverpool)—"Jesus Christ Man or Myth?"

PADIHAM: 7.0, Sunday, July 5, Mr. J. Clayton.

READ: 7.30, Thursday, July 9, Mr. J. Clayton.

SEAHAM HARBOUR (Bradfield Square): 7.0, Debate, "Is Atheism More Reasonable than Christianity?" *Affir.*: Mr. J. T. Brighton. *Neg.*: Rev. M. Binnie (Methodist Church).

SOUTH BANK (Bennet's Corner): 7.0, Wednesday, July 8, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

STOCKTON (The Cross): 7.0, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

SUNDERLAND BRANCH N.S.S. (Gill Bridge Avenue): 7.0, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

TEES-SIDE BRANCH N.S.S. (Five Lamps, Thornaby-on-Tees): Thursday, July 2, Mr. H. Dalkin—"Freethought of Thought." Davidson Street, Middlesbrough, Friday, July 10, Mr. H. Dalkin—"Materialism."

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