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

Views and Opinions

An Ancient Myth

ATTIS was one of the gods of vegetation. His mother, Nana, like so many of the saviour gods, was said to have been a virgin, and conceived through putting a pomegranate seed in her bosom. Of Attis there are two accounts given concerning his death. One is that he was killed by a boar, which led to his followers never eating the pig, in which they were imitated by the Jews; the other is that he unsexed himself under a tree and bled to death as a result. For that reason his most fervid male followers showed their devotion to their god by unsexing themselves, as the Christian monks did, either physically or, in later times, by self-denial. The history of these gods—including the Christian one—is rather monotonous reading. Gods lack originality. Frazer thus describes the annual ceremony of the festival held in honour of the god Attis.

On the twenty-second of March, a pine tree was cut in the woods and brought into the sanctuary of Cybele, where it was treated as a great divinity. The trunk was swathed like a corpse with woollen bands . . . and the effigy of a young man . . . was tied to the middle of the stem. . . . The third day, the twenty-fourth of March, was known as the day of blood: the Archgallus, or high-priest, drew blood from his arm and presented it as an offering. . . . Stirred by the wild barbaric music of clashing cymbals, rumbling drums, droning horns and screaming flutes, the inferior clergy whirled about in the dance with wagging heads and streaming hair, until wrapt in a frenzy of excitement and insensible to pain, they gashed their bodies with potsherds or slashed them with knives in order to bespatter the altar and the sacred tree with their blood. The ghastly rite formed part of the mourning for Attis, and may have been intended to strengthen him for the resurrection. . . . Further we may conjecture that it was on the same Day of Blood that the novices sacrificed their virility. . . . Wrought up to the highest pitch of religious excitement they dashed

the severed portions of themselves against the image of the cruel goddess. (Cybele)

* * *

The Drag of the Past

Part of this ancient myth, which is to be found in Christian belief and practice, has been taken by Dr. W. A. Brend as the text for his work, *Sacrifice to Attis; a Study in Sex and Civilization* (Heinemann, 10s. 6d.). Dr. Brend's theme is the burden of the past that man carries with him, and the degree to which the urge to a more adventurous, and better, way of living is checked by it. The greatest enemies of the living are the dead. Against the tyranny of the living, man may and does revolt. So he does, to some extent, against the dead, but here there is the power of the primitive taboo, the influence of the age-long subservience to intellectually discredited authority and beliefs that hold him back. Whether one agrees or not with the special interpretation given by Dr. Brend of this drag on progress, the fact of the drag remains, and one may derive help from the study of *Sacrifice to Attis*. In either case one's horizon is certain to be widened, and one's ideas clarified by the reading.

On one point every sane student of sociology will be agreed. This is that the attitude of the Christian Church towards sex, and its broad denunciation of all sex relationships as involving a fall from relative "purity," are responsible for incalculable evil. It has made morally unclean that which began with a ritual uncleanness only, and the more Christianity became affected by a higher civilized life, the more marked became this transformation. A worthy historical treatise which explains the way in which the attempt to combine primitive taboos with modern moral and intellectual condemnations, makes the first meaningless and degrades the latter, has yet to be written; but it will be illuminating when it arrives.

All the same, I do not think that Dr. Brend is quite justified in placing so much of the responsibility for this essential uncleanness of Christianity when dealing with sex on Paul. Paul was, indeed, one of the most powerful forces in shaping Christianity, but the sex obsession was already there in the different cults from which distinctive Christianity was formed. The "Woman touch me not!" of Jesus, and the sex denunciation of Paul, can only be explained on the hypothesis of generally received religious ideas before Christianity came, and which formed an essential part of Christianity from the outset. Dr. Brend is right in treating the case of Paul as pathological, and we could wish that he had dealt with his case more fully. The author's medical qualifications and the character of the book before us mark him as one well suited for the task.

The Power of Taboo

But Dr. Brend does make quite clear how heavy is the price the world has paid for the domination of the Christian Church, with its preservation and consecration of so many primitive taboos. There is no evidence at all that in the primitive state women were regarded with hatred; there was only that fear of her in some of her sex aspects, which was common to all things closely associated with the supernatural, and which still obtains in the fear of witches and ghosts. But Christianity suffered from having to develop in a relatively civilized environment, and in having to overcome the better influences therein if it were to perpetuate itself. The result was that the precautions taken against women, owing to the religious fear generated by child-birth and menstruation, became translated into a moral indictment by Christian leaders, who meanwhile perpetuated the religious ritual that gave their indictment a sharper edge. Although the nature of this process is not specifically dealt with by Dr. Brend, it is well illustrated by the material of his chapter on "Early Woman Haters," (devoted to the early Christian writers with examples from later writers), while the chapter "Sex Trials of Unbelievers," gives the preceding one point in illustrating the persisting power of primitive sex superstitions. To throw off Christian doctrines, a very easy thing nowadays, is a very different thing from getting rid of the religious point of view concerning sex and life generally. In the chapters on "the Origin of Guilt," the "Sex Psychology of Women," "The Teaching of Religion," and the "Acquirement of Sex Knowledge," this is made very plain.

The truth is that there are very few, or comparatively few, genuinely liberated minds in the world. And if liberation is to be accomplished it means more than a mere formal rejection of religious beliefs. As Dr. Brend says, it means

setting up a standard of conduct based upon knowledge . . . taking man as he is and (fitting) a moral code to him instead of torturing him to comply with a predetermined ethic. . . . These changes challenge established authority, and they strike at its very foundation, the fear and awe of the father, woven into the child's emotions in early life. For this reason they will be as fiercely resisted by those who have bowed the head to authority as by those who wield it, themselves inheritors from the past. The hypnotized scout leader will proudly fight by the side of the bishop under the banner of decency and morality. Yet rebellion is always below the surface. . . . At the very dawn of our history we see the Roman priest in his temple on the Thames crudely and literally emasculating his followers. To-day the father in the Church is equally destroying the manhood of his sons by means, gentler and less effective because more widespread, and he has therefore brought the end of his people in sight. If there is any real national spirit in these islands; if those who now wish themselves to be free, and their descendants to people the country, then they must learn that the bonds which have been forged for them, and which they in turn have forged for others, are unnatural, deadly to both body and mind, and based upon fears akin to those in dreams.

That is the challenging conclusion to Dr. Brend's book, but it is a logical conclusion to a stimulating and provocative work.

* * *

Old Men of the Tribe

We have no space to deal with the interesting chapters on the Father as Schoolmaster, as Judge and as God. They provide a psycho-analytic basis for the rule of the elders of the tribe, which rest ultimately upon the fears and veneration established in early years. I can only commend these chapters for

serious study, and pass a word of criticism on two points, neither of them fundamental, but which may, so to speak, provide alternative readings. The first has to deal with the decline in the increase of population. I cannot help regarding this danger as a very theoretical one. The decline that has taken place has no demonstrable significance, and there are so many unsuspected factors the future may reveal that may upset prophecy. The significance seems mainly political and national. Germany and Italy, for example, want more births, but not better brains or a higher personal character. And other countries want more, so that they may "swarm" more effectively (nationally) over the earth. But if a higher death rate means only that the existing nations may die out; that seems anything but a fearful prospect. The present fear is, rather that our existing civilization will persist without material alteration for the better.

My second point has to deal with what Dr. Brend regards as the fallacy of a herd instinct. I agree that there is a deal of nonsense talked about instinct. In both scientific and lay circles it is often used as an "abracadabra" to save careful thinking. But challenging the existence of an instinct will not remove here a very pregnant fact. Dr. Brend himself points out, quite rightly, that within the historic period man has not himself evolved, but the environment to which man has to adapt himself. This, of necessity, implies a weakening of instinct and the development of a greater degree of plasticity in the organism. The better plan would be to leave the question of instinct on one side, and to fix attention upon the enormous ability of the human brain and nervous system. The "herd instinct" may, therefore be no more than a special easily developed expression of this plasticity. But man is so dependent upon his kind, first owing to the long periods of infancy, and secondly because of the developed environment to which Dr. Brend refers, that if the feeling for the herd is not a true instinct, the feeling for the herd develops so early and so strongly, that it may easily be taken for one.

The chapters on Fatherhood are so important that I venture to suggest another view of the facts presented, without questioning the truth of Dr. Brend's analysis. It is a fact that our education, from babyhood to adolescence, is too greatly under the control of the old men of the tribe. They were of necessity the first educators, at a time when a written language was unknown, and their instruction was dominated by belief in a devastating supernaturalism. Ever since the old men have kept their place as dictators and educators. There is no question that the domination of the old over the young leads to an education that makes the shaking off of ancient taboos and superstitions difficult with all, and impossible to a great many. It is not merely the sex life of the people that needs relief from ancient taboos and these modern representatives of the old men of the tribe. It is true of life as a whole. We are dogged by the fears, the terrors and the superstitions that have come down to us from the most primitive times. The savage lies deeply imbedded in humanity; and contemporary events have supplied a sharp reminder that it requires but little to bring it to the surface. We are still sacrificing to Attis.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

Let us hope, but let us also work. Liberty is never voluntarily conceded; it is always conquered. The warriors of freedom must raise the standard of revolt; not in a spirit of anarchy, but in a spirit of reform; for order can only be conserved by progress, and the essential condition of progress is liberty.—G. W. Foots.

The Clarity of Confucius

"Fear not the future, weep not for the past."
Shelley.

"That low man goes on adding one to one,
His hundred's soon lit,
This high man, aiming at a million,
Misses an unit."—Browning.

"EX ORIENTE LUX" (Out of the East, Light) was a saying well known to the Ancients, and, like so many cryptic statements, it is only a partial view of the truth. From the Orient came some illumination, but there also came a cloud of superstition, so dark that it almost defies analysis. Much has been made of the brilliancy of the Oriental intellect, and it would be most unwise to underrate it, but how often does it stray from the path of invincible sanity and tend to lose itself in a veritable labyrinth of theory and conjecture. Buddha, Kapila, Laotse, Kung Fao Tso, were worthy compeers of Plato and Socrates, but what of the pundits and scribes who transmitted the sheen of poetry itself into the leaden, immovable stereotype of dogma, and made money in the process?

The teaching of Confucius, as his name has been Latinized, is like a well of limpid water in the arid, endless waste of Oriental superstition. To turn to the "Analects," after a perusal of some other of the so-called Sacred Books of the East, is not unlike turning to the pellucid pages of Marcus Aurelius after perusing the turgid and pathological phantasmagoria of the Fathers of the Christian Church. For Confucius was a very great teacher, without any trace of the charlatan, and it says much for the sane, practical sincerity of the Chinese intellect that his teaching was accepted, rather than the kaleidoscope of beliefs which is generally recognized as religion in the Eastern world.

Born in 551 B.C., Confucius was a most notable man in a very remarkable period of history, which gave birth to Gautama Buddha in India, and in Greece to Æschylus and to Pythagoras, the father of social philosophy. China was at that time the most powerful nation of Eastern Asia, and was a world in itself. The nation had existed for thousands of years previously to the time of Confucius, for the Shoo King, or Book of History, which he edited, begins as far back as 2356 B.C. Himself a student, or rather, a truthseeker, he sought all that he thought valuable in the history and religion of China. "A transmitter, not a maker," he called himself modestly, but it was his own quick brain that saw what was essential, and that gave unity to the vast subject matter with which he had to deal. Hence his system has the stamp of truth and finality. So much is this the case, that, to know China rightly, it is said that it is necessary to study the life and work of Confucius. Only a man, Confucius has, by virtue of his position as a teacher of a whole people, become, as it were, a superman, whose tremendous reputation has survived four and twenty centuries, and is still a vital influence over a large part of the Eastern world.

The key to the Confucian teaching is the question of mutual duties, and, in order to permit such a condition of society, a stable and peaceful social state seemed to him the one thing needful. The ideal of Confucius is that of a united and peaceful empire, and it is not too much to say that his teaching, more than anything else, has been the secret of China's great and impressive unity through the troubles of many thousand years, and the trampling of many conquests.

Confucius was secularistic in his philosophy. He stood firm on the actual laws of nature and the social relations, and not on alleged supernatural revelation.

"We cannot as yet," said he, "perform our duties to men; how can we perform our duties to spirits?" And again, "We know not yet about life, how can we know about death?" "My aim," he said on another occasion, "is to learn from things below and rise to things above." A disciple once asked Confucius if there were not one word which would serve as a rule of conduct for all life, and he replied: "Is not reciprocity such a word? What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others," thus antedating the so-called "Golden Rule" of the Christians by five centuries.

Confucius owed much to Lao Tse, but he very often bettered the instruction of the earlier sage. He was at one with Lao Tse in teaching man to attain self-government, not, as Lao Tse taught, that he might live a solitary life, but that he might be the better able to contribute to the well-being and order of society. Confucianism is not only one of the oldest of systems, but it has been remarkably successful. Nor is this so surprising, since Confucius built entirely upon the quintessential wisdom of men well versed in the art of government, and, with unerring sagacity, he confined it to this world. It knows nothing of prayer, and is not troubled by priest-made problems of sin and guilt. It is opposed to idolatry. Priests are unknown to it, and so are ecclesiastics. Instruction in the classics supplies all that is needed to make men wise, wealthy, honoured and virtuous. This is Confucianism, and it appealed eminently to the Chinese, a people practical and unspeculative, the traders of the East; and who have so many points of resemblance to the English people that it is worth noting.

This is no rhetorical flourish, for in examining the histories of both peoples it is startling to find the points of resemblance between the Chinese and the English. Both have founded powerful empires, and both are practical and unspeculative. Both lay far too much insistence upon the past, and fail to recognize that the world is greater than their own country. They adopt the attitude that they are "the heirs of all the ages," and are of the permanent factors of humanity. They both give full recognition to the power of law, of example, of ceremonial, of custom. As for the Chinese system of education, we may almost add that the Confucian method is the ideal after which so many British administrators are groping, and our own Civil Service is a proof of the fundamental value of the teaching of the old Oriental sage.

Confucius was, indeed, a light-bearer. Few men ever read history and the classics with keener eyes. He saw the core of things, and there are no half-truths, or evasions, in his teachings. Remember, he was a teacher, a truth-seeker. Saviours there always have been. Mithra was a redeemer. Zoroaster was born of a virgin. Persephone descended into hell. Osiris rose from the dead. Gautama was tempted by the devil. Moses was transfigured. Elijah ascended into heaven. But in no belief is there a parallel for a man like Confucius, whose wise teaching alone has held a large portion of the Eastern world for over two millenniums. At the Pillars of Hercules early geographers put on their maps: "Hic deficit orbis" Here ends the world. They had no suspicion that beyond the world known to them stretched another world twice as great. Christians are equally innocent. The comparison of religious systems is one that transcends the limits of their narrow and circumscribed experience. The form as well as the content of all religions must be studied comparatively. The Christian Bible cannot be exempted from the same criticism that we apply to the Koran, the Vedas, the

Tripitaka, the Shoo King, the Analects of Confucius, or even the Book of Mormon. As for Confucius, he remains one of the most persuasive voices and one of the biggest personalities the world has produced. As a showman there are plenty to eclipse him, but as a real constructive genius he has had no rival. He is the sanest influence of the Orient, and his secret is that he knew the book of the world as well as the world of books.

MIMNERMUS.

Things Worth Knowing*

LIV.

EDUCATION AND CIVILIZATION

It is to knowledge that civilization is due, and the true object of education is to confer knowledge. . . . It is as false to call all the inhabitants of the so-called civilized world civilized, as to call the people in Christendom Christians. Both these errors are prevalent. A civilized man must be a civil man, a gentleman. He must be assimilated to the conditions of civilization around him. The mark of a barbarian is not the language he speaks but the deity he worships. It is his rude intellectual development, his narrow range of views, his rough treatment of others. Everything that distinguishes a savage from a civilized man can be directly or indirectly traced to the differences of education. From the native Guinean to Toussaint L' Overture, from the prehistoric cave-dweller to the *savant* who studies his ancient abode, only differences of civilization are perceptible. Doubtless there are differences of brain development, but education, when long periods are considered, is the most potent agency in developing brain.

. . . Just as poverty in the midst of wealth aggravates its evils, so ignorance in the midst of intelligence is intensified by the contrast. A generally low state of intelligence is comparatively harmless, since there is a normal degree of correspondence among all the parts of the social fabric. But a stolid and vicious class in the midst of science, learning, and culture, like a "bull in a china shop," presents such a complete state of inharmony and unfitness that the effect is out of proportion to the cause. Civilization, like all organized progress, has only been achieved at vast expense to the social energies. Every assault of savagery upon so complicated and expensive an organization costs society an immense sacrifice, and is felt in all parts of the social system.

There is even a worse consequence. So long as society has this burden on its shoulders it cannot progress in refinement. It must cling to a large part of its old crudeness, as a protection against its unassimilated membership. It must be perpetually hampered by a heavy coat of mail in consequence of the perpetual dangers that beset it. This tends powerfully to neutralize the progressive agencies within and to equilibrate the rhythm of its motion. In a word, while the state of civilization around them has no tendency to raise the uncivilized classes up towards its level, but rather aggravates the contrast, the presence of these classes in the midst of civilization tends powerfully to lower the condition of the lower and clog its advance.

* 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.

. . . Looking at the subject from the point of view of social welfare alone, it is obviously less important that a great amount of intelligence shall exist than that the data of intelligence shall be in the possession of all alike. . . . It is demonstrable that intelligence may and often does, exist in forms which render it a positive evil in society. The knowledge which enables man to manufacture intoxicating beverages is unquestionably an immense damage to society, and strikes directly at human happiness. The knowledge which enables one class of men to enslave another class brings misery to thousands and enjoyment to but few. The greater part of the evils of society which are usually and correctly ascribed to ignorance, might with almost equal propriety be ascribed to intelligence. The ignorance, which causes them is only relative ignorance. The power that enacts them is the power of relatively greater intelligence.

. . . The distribution underlies all social reform. So long as capital and labour are the respective symbols of intelligence and ignorance, the present iniquity in the distribution of wealth will continue. It may be urged that since there exists so great inequality in the natural capacity of the human mind, there must still ever exist, even after knowledge shall have been equally distributed, a corresponding inequality of intelligence, and that therefore the proposed change will only substitute one species of inequality for another. The answer is twofold.

First, the differences in native capacity, though admittedly great, are small compared with the differences of information. The supposed intellectual inequality is greatly exaggerated. The large fund of good sense which is always found among the lower, uneducated classes is an obtrusive fact to every observing mind. The ability with which ignorant people employ their small fund of knowledge has surprised many learned men. . . . The great bulk of humanity are fully witted, and amply capable of taking care of themselves if afforded an opportunity. In fact, it is out of this class that the majority of the great names of history have been taken. It is a mistake to suppose that the sole element of excellence is superior intellectual power. It is usually an average intellect joined to an indomitable will, a tenacious perseverance or an unquenchable ambition.

. . . It is a prevalent belief that so-called self-made men attain their distinction in consequence of the adverse circumstances against which they are compelled to contend. The phenomenon so frequent in modern times of men working up from obscurity to eminence is supposed to support this view. Looked at more closely, however, this argument is found to involve a fatal fallacy. It must be remembered that "obscurity" embraces all but a minute fraction of the human race. The proportion to their class of those who thus rise out of it is next to infinitesimal. On the other hand the class having means and leisure is numerically very small. One case of distinction from this class would be relatively equal to all that can be named from the other. Yet no one can deny that there are many great names belonging exclusively to the latter class. It is sufficient to mention Lord Bacon, Sir Isaac Newton, Alexander von Humboldt, Sir Charles Lyell, or Charles Darwin, in order to show that leisure is not, as is claimed, a detriment to aspiration. It shows to the contrary that the want of it is the great barrier to intellectual excellence; that poverty and monotonous toil crush out millions of potential luminaries in society.

. . . The other fact of the relatively frequent rise of men of leisure to eminence, and the great achievements of such men, also teaches a useful truth, viz.,

that if the true merits of mankind are to be brought out, it must be done by equalizing the opportunities of all. . . . The fact that most of the important contributions to science and literature emanate from men holding chairs in universities or high official posts with abundant opportunities, and which bring them into direct relation with their subject, makes it evident that almost anyone else under the same circumstances would have done equally well; or at least if some would have done less well, then others would have done better, the chances either way being about equal. These and a thousand other facts tend to show that the distinctions now so apparent between men are for the most part differences of position, of education, of opportunity—artificial differences—and that the real, or intellectual, differences are comparatively slight.

. . . The present enormous chasm between the ignorant and the intelligent, caused by the unequal distribution of knowledge, is the worst evil under which society labours. This is because it places in the power of a small number, having no greater natural capacity, and no natural right or title, to seek their happiness at the expense of a large number. The large number, deprived of the means of intelligence, though born with the capacity for it, are really compelled by the small number, through the exercise of a superior intelligence, to serve them without compensation. . . . The former occupies his position solely in consequence of his relative ignorance, the latter occupies his solely in consequence of his relative intelligence. Knowledge is power, and power has ever been wielded for self-aggrandisement. To prevent inequality of advantages there must be equality of power, i.e., equality of knowledge.

Dynamic Sociology (1897),

by LESTER F. WARD, Vol. II., pp. 593-602.

Man's Domesticated Servitors

The many lower animals tamed by man have played a large and important part in his social and economic evolution. Rats, mice and other destructive creatures have been reduced in number by the common cat. In ancient Egypt, the granary of the classic world, our feline companion was domesticated at least as early as the thirteenth century B.C. The familiar European species seems to have descended from European stock, but has probably been intercrossed by the wild cats that roamed so freely in the woods of Britain and other Western regions in days of old.

In man's hunting stage many immature animals must have been taken alive, as well as adults that were merely wounded. Thus wild creatures would grow accustomed to human companionship, with their occasional breeding in semi-captivity. Under the more settled conditions of agriculture, when man became more and more resident on the soil he cultivated, various animals would visit his rude shelters and browse on his crops, thus facilitating domestication.

It is noteworthy that most domesticated animals were native to the Temperate Regions of Eurasia, the birthplace of the more progressive peoples. The black races, on the other hand, are remarkably deficient in domesticated stock of their own devising. Yet Africa is extremely rich in mammalian life. The zebra, elephant; a vast array of deer and other useful animals abound, yet these were never domesticated. As Professor Spencer Trotter notes in his *New Geography*: "The Negroids of the East and South Afri-

can grasslands have herds of cattle, sheep and goats, but they are the descendants of the animals domesticated centuries ago by the white race of Egypt. Pastoral life, though often rude and barbarous, is a step towards a higher culture. The uncertainty of securing game and the frequent failure of the food supply in the Temperate Regions must very early have led man to the cultivation and domestication of those wild stocks of plants and animals which, to-day form the basis of his wealth and well-being."

The dog was early tamed, and its remains accompany man's in the prehistoric shell-mounds of Scandinavia as well as in the ancient lake dwellings of Switzerland. Domesticated canines were sculptured on Egyptian monuments of 3,000 B.C. These include wolf-dogs, hounds, and a variety of terrier. Two kinds of dogs are represented in Assyrian art, while the earliest reference to the animal as a human attendant in Hebrew writings occurs in the Book of Tobit. Jewish hatred of the animal has been attributed to the circumstance that it was adored in ancient Egypt. Prof. J. A. Thomson reminds us that in classic Greece, "Xenophon records two species of Spartan dogs. Many references are found to their use in battle . . . so that the 'dogs of war' was no mere figure of speech."

Primitive men and wolves alike pursued their prey in packs, and it was in the hunting period that the dog was domesticated. Perhaps all Eurasian dogs are descended from wolves, but it is probable that some extinct types may have been tamed. Still, the dogs of American Indians so closely resemble the native wolves that they are barely distinguishable from them, while those of the Eskimo are obviously the descendants of the indigenous Arctic wolf. The pariah dogs of the Indians are plainly related to the native wolf while other varieties resemble jackals. The beautiful collie displays several wolf-like characters.

When the hunting stage was succeeded by the pastoral and agricultural economies, other animals were brought under human control. The dog protected the flocks and herds and barked when strangers appeared. Tropical races possessed few, if any, dogs, but these animals from remote times have been man's attendants throughout the wide territories of Eurasia and North America. In Greenland the dogs draw sledges over the icefields and defend their masters from the truculent bear. A troop of dogs may be seen in every Red Indian settlement.

Domesticated cattle date back to prehistoric times. Sheep and goats were also domesticated in Neolithic days. The flocks and herds of early man were all descended from species native to Western Europe and surviving breeds, which include the celebrated Chillingham cattle, are their descendants. The ox was tamed in Eastern lands in long-past centuries and is depicted on the monuments of ancient Egypt. In Europe, Japan and elsewhere humped cattle were pastured before the dawn of history, and the white Zebu is still sacred to the devotees of Siva in Hindostan. Among some South African tribes "peculiar breeds occur, notably the *backleys* of the Kaffirs, which are trained to guard sheep like dogs." The immense multitudes of cattle that now graze in the Pampas of the Argentine are the half-wild descendants of the cattle shipped to America by the Spaniards when they invaded that Continent in the sixteenth century.

Central Eurasia seems to have been the birthplace of our modern breeds of sheep. Their original home was among the highlands of Europe and Asia, but whether the wild species which still dwell in these uplands are the ancestors of our domesticated sheep

is undecided. The fondness of all varieties of sheep for hilly situations suggests their mountain origin, and several untamed species inhabit elevated regions such as the Pamirs, the Atlas Range and the Rocky Mountains, where they preserve their primitive character.

Goats are descended from wild ancestors native to the hills of Asia. The Persian goat and the ibex of the Alps retain their wildness. Apart from the common forms, several breeds of tamed goats exist, such as the dwarf goat of West Africa, the Nubian, Maltese, Syrian, Angora and Kashmir varieties. The two last are valued for the abundance and superior quality of their wool.

The milk yielded by the goat, sheep, mare and cow has been highly appreciated from very remote times. All these mammals have proved serviceable agents in human ascent from savagery to civilization. The ox preceded the horse and ass as a beast of burden.

But the horse eventually displaced the bovine organism as a draught animal. In warfare and the chase the horse had no rival, while the ox and the ass continued to perform the heavier labour. Horses were domesticated at least as early as the Neolithic Age, apparently in Western Asia. Wild horses still roam in the steppes and hills of that region which are probably the survivals of the species from which all modern types have sprung. Nomads in the Kirghiz steppes employ horses in labour, and also utilize them for food, while their fermented milk provides the tribe with an intoxicating beverage.

The ass seems to have been first used as a domestic quadruped in Eastern lands, probably Syria and Egypt. The ass, as we know it, plainly resembles the wild species still at large in the Abyssinian uplands. Striped horses—the Zebra, the quagga and the dauw—are peculiar to South Africa, but these have never been domesticated.

The male ass and the mare have been crossed from antiquity, and their hybrid offspring were familiar in Greece. Hardy and firm-footed, the mule is very serviceable for carrying goods and as a draught animal in mountainous districts, and in hot and arid regions. It is immune from diseases which often prove fatal to horses, and these desirable qualities make it popular for transport purposes in the highland areas of France, Spain, Italy and elsewhere.

There is little known of the ancestors of the various domesticated pigs, although these animals were certainly tamed in the temperate climes of Eurasia. Swine have been introduced into every part of the world, and their flesh, bristles, lard and other products have given rise to invaluable industries in many lands, particularly the United States, whose exports of porcine products rival those of cotton and wheat.

The Indian jungle cock is the progenitor of every variety of domesticated fowl. The tamed bird was well known in the Far East thousands of years ago. Six or seven centuries B.C. it had reached Babylon, and was common in China even earlier. Aquatic birds such as ducks and geese were also domesticated in remote times. The wild duck is the obvious ancestor of our familiar breeds, but the goose appears of composite origin, for several distinct species seem to have been brought under control.

The servitors of man thus far mentioned enjoy a far-flung distribution and are present in nearly every European or New World farm. There are others whose lives are restricted by climatal and other environmental influences. Two species of camel are strictly confined to Northern Africa and Southern and Central Asia. These have been man's com-

panions for untold ages and are known only in conditions of domestication, nor do traditions survive of any wild form. The highly intelligent camel's close adaptation to desert life, as well as to that of elevated tablelands is remarkable. The Bactrian or two-humped camel is native to Central Asia, and ranges from Lake Baikal to China, and is the great transport animal of these regions, where it resists the severest cold. The one-humped Arabian species—the dromedary—which travels from the Sahara Desert to India, has been the "ship of the desert" from ages immemorial.

An animal closely related to the camel is the llama, several varieties of which are indigenous to the great Andes Mountains from Patagonia to Peru, and one of these was in use as a beast of burden when the American Continent was first discovered.

The sagacious elephant has long laboured for man both in peace and war. In ancient Indian conflicts it played a conspicuous part, but the animal's massiveness and slow movement led to its discomfiture when the battle horse appeared. The Carthaginians of old domesticated the African elephant once and for all, and Hannibal employed it for purposes of transport when he invaded Italy. Many of these were captured by the Romans.

The yak, a large animal almost intermediate between oxen and sheep, is used as a beast of burden in Tibet, while, in the extreme north, many primitive peoples have partly tamed the beautiful reindeer which serves as a carrier and draught animal, and also furnishes flesh, milk, skins for tent covering, raiment and other amenities to the community.

T. F. PALMER.

Acid Drops

The Gifford Lectures (originally founded and endowed for the purpose of providing a platform for the discussion of religious beliefs, including Atheism, but which have become a close ground for parsons and their near relations) by the Bishop of Durham, has just been published. The Bishop believes that the only religion that is suited to mankind universally is Christianity. Which, being interpreted, means that the Bishop cannot think that any religion will be a good one or worth while which leaves him out. And we have no doubt that a maggot has an equally contemptuous opinion of any cheese that will not harbour maggots. But the reason for the Bishop's conclusion is not put so plainly. What he says is:—

Buddhism requires an Asiatic temperament, Mohammedanism cannot be reconciled with the higher culture, and Hinduism is incorrigibly nationalistic.

We suppose any nonsense does so long as it is used on behalf of religion. But Buddhism has attracted some of the finest types of European character that have come into contact with it. Judaism has adapted itself to every country in the world, and has produced men and women who were every whit as international in their feelings and sympathies as Christians, and Mohammedans, at a time when the whole of Christendom was sunk in ignorance, dirt and theology, created a new scientific and philosophic civilization for the western world, and provided the means by which the Christian world once more emerged into the light of civilization. But as we have said, any nonsense goes down with Christian readers so long as it is Christian, and the Bishop of Durham evidently has this fact in mind.

Last week Mr. Cohen dealt in "Views and Opinions" with Dr. Inge and his throwing overboard belief in the efficacy of prayer. In a recent issue of the *Star*, Dean Matthews takes Mr. Inge to task. It is rather amusing

to find the present Dean of St. Paul's going for the late Dean, and perhaps the latter is not quite playing the game. Dr. Inge never denied the efficacy of prayer while he was in business, and it is not acting with consideration for him now to throw cold water on the teachings of the one who is now helping to keep the old firm on its feet. Perhaps we ought to wait for the time when Dr. Matthews retires to get his unprofessional opinion. At present he is committed to the belief in prayer, and so must "play the game."

All the same, when one looks at the quality of Dean Matthews' reply, one feels that he would have shown greater wisdom in silence. Consider the following. Dr. Inge had said that praying for rain was useless because we knew the causes of weather changes, and there was no room here for the weather to be altered by our prayers. But Dr. Matthews says he cannot agree praying for rain is unreasonable, because the idea that nature is governed by unalterable laws is old fashioned, and probably untrue. Why is it probably untrue? Because the new view of scientific law is that it represents only statistical averages. Well, what is a statistical average? It means that while we do not know enough to say what will occur in the case of every individual of a group, we do know that taking a group of persons as a whole, there will be a uniform result. But perhaps Dr. Matthews will condescend to explain how you can rely upon a calculable result in the whole unless there is a calculable basis in the individual members? A statistical law merely says that we have not the same knowledge in the one case that we have in the other. A statistical law is an expression of want of knowledge of one aspect of the problem only. But Dr. Matthews does not know any more about the two factors than the scientist does, and his statement of belief is based entirely upon his ignorance—and upon his duty to hang on to prayer—while he is Dean of St. Paul's.

One other example from this Dean, who is better at running from a direct issue than facing it. Dr. Inge had said, after he gave up the post of Dean, that the way to test prayer would be to take two groups of patients, equalize all the conditions as much as possible, pray over one group, give medical attention to the other group, and then note the results. That is the way you test anything, counting the results from different methods. But Dean Matthews, who is in a post where he must pray or resign, says the method is absurd. You would have to make certain that no one prayed. This is more stupid than his other reply. What evidence is there? Someone says he was cured by prayer. How does he know? What test can he apply? Another sick person has no prayers and he gets better. What cured him? Is the man who got cured built on different lines? Will Dr. Matthews state any case which he considers a fair test of the power of prayer? If he has any evidence at all it must surely be of a kind that can be put into words. Let him name any case he pleases of an answer to prayer by the Christian God, and we will undertake to supply similar cases of as much benefit received after praying to a barber's-shop wooden Scotchman or an African idol—and he may select his own wooden idol. Will he be straightforward enough to say that he has no evidence at all, but that it is his job to preach the power of prayer, as it was once the job of Dr. Inge, and he will go on preaching it—until he retires?

The Bishop of Stafford, Dr. Crick, is reported by the *Church Times* as saying, "I believe that to-day the whole world depends upon the character of our British race." We fancy we have heard this before—in another form. On the authority of Hitler we have been told that the welfare of the world depends upon the Germanic race, and from Mussolini that it depends upon the Italian peoples, and from Russia that it depends upon Russia. Meanwhile, we have heard rumours that away in Africa the Hottentots have determined it depends upon them. There seems quite a revival of the chosen race theory. And just now the original one is passing through a very bad time. The religious idea takes a lot of killing.

Those who wish to realize what a combination of high military officers and the Church is capable of should refresh their minds by reading the summary of the famous Dreyfus Trial, which the *Daily Telegraph* is now publishing day by day. A greater farrago of lying, forgery, and brutality has seldom been seen. The lying was worthy of the *Daily Mail* at its best, and but for the heroic courage of the Atheist Zola, Dreyfus would have ended his days in the "Devil's Island." And those engaged in the fabrication of the case against Dreyfus were all "honourable men," deeply imbued with the honour of the army and a concern for the well-being of the Church. The French people saw that the Church was at the root of the matter, and, with characteristic logic disestablished it. In this country we should have appointed a Royal Commission, which after sitting for a year or two would have presented a report which would have led to—just nothing.

A Catholic reviewer of the autobiography of Sir James Sexton notes the following:—

No doubt it is his modesty that makes Sir James dismiss in two sentences the tremendous struggle he and Sir James O'Grady put up against secular education, when it became a plank in the Trade Union Congress. . . . If he and Sir James had not won the fight they put up so valiantly against the Secularists, the Trade Union movement to-day would undoubtedly be in a much weakened position, for it never would have drawn to its ranks the outstanding Catholic men who up and down the country hold such a large number of executive posts. Sir James ought really to write the story of his fight as a warning to the Trade Union movement to-day, and as a guide to Catholic Trade Unionists.

We trust that this little extract will prove that our fight for Secular Education is still a stern one. It will not be won by indifference.

That little insect specially created to disintegrate the buildings erected by man, the Death or Death Watch Beetle, has been discovered to be hard at work in the Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford. This is regrettable, but man can be relied upon to do his utmost to overcome the obstacles God puts in the way of the diffusion of knowledge. Generally the more serious depredations of this insect have been observed in the temples erected to God's honour and glory. By some oversight Paley never used examples of this kind when elaborating his famous design argument.

There is a shop in Newgate Street, London City, with a show of idols and other exotic figures which bring the flavour of an Eastern bazaar to the hard pavements of the land of Gog and Magog. The following is a literal copy of a notice in its window, surrounded by plain and coloured replicas of saints, christs, and apostles: "His Star, Morning Star, Star of the Sea, Guiding Star, Holy Spirit, Dove of Peace, Guardian and other Angels. . . . Fish—Emblem of Christianity. Circle—Emblem of Eternity. . . . Prices: Plaques (with screws) for affixing to Planes, 7s. 6d.; Pendants for personal wear, 5s. 6d. . . . For Aircraft and personal use." Is Houndsditch moving West?

That sturdy defender of the faith, the *Sunday Express*, had two interesting articles the other day. One was by Mr. Ivor Nicholson, who is terribly anxious that everybody should go to Church if only once a year. Why, is not quite so clear, except that he wants the unlucky people who do go "to hear an honest and powerful appeal" to do right and abjure evil. These appeals surely would put off most intelligent people; besides that is not what the churches are for. They were built to bring men unto Christ, by whom only can they be "saved"; to listen to dreary extracts from the Bible; and to take part in the singing of nonsense verses, not far removed from Edward Lear. No wonder people get less and less impressed by "Churchianity."

The second article is all about "Redskin Snake Priests Who Pray for Rain." Now we consider these snake priests are doing God's work equally with the Pope's

priests or those of the Archbishop of Canterbury. The result is bound to be the same as the Lord is no respecter of persons. That this is so is proved by the fact that hundreds of white farmers in Arizona helped the snake priests—who by the way had their bodies painted to resemble clouds and lightning, which showed how very sensible they were. It must be added that as the snake priests were confident that their religious antics were bound to persuade the Almighty, the white farmers went away delighted. So far, however, God seems to have transferred the watering-pot to England for the drought is still on in Arizona. Perhaps after all, he prefers the prayers of the Bishop of London.

Lord Castlerosse saw some German refugees in Paris recently. He remarks:—

I looked at these most unfortunate people who are being persecuted because they happen to be Jews, and thanked heaven for my British nationality. There, at least, is liberty of thought. I myself do not believe that we shall be left this heritage unless we are prepared to fight for it.

We agree. We must be prepared to fight for it, and, as far as the Freethought Party is concerned, we can assure Lord Castlerosse it is ready. But what does he mean by "liberty of thought." Roman Catholicism? For as Lord Castlerosse, we understand, is a Catholic, does it not seem a contradiction in terms? Does he believe that there would be or could be "liberty of thought" under his creed?

We knew it would come. A writer in the *Sunday Express*, the other day, learnedly informs us that "science has been inquiring into one of the greatest catastrophes that ever befell a nation—the ten plagues of Egypt. They (*sic*) have found that modern theories are in accord with the Bible story." That surely must be obvious. Every plague happened exactly as narrated, and the great story can now be classed with the others which have proved to be true, the fall of Jericho, the Universal Flood, The Tower of Babel, etc. The "science" which has been enquiring into the matter turns out to be a Dr. Brim of *New York*, and that ought to be 'nuff said for anybody with intelligence.

Bishop Knox is, we understand, "advocating a more frequent use of the Litany." One pious writer deplors the fact that "the Church is suffering from the cult of the easy, the popular, and the emotional." He is strongly in favour of the Litany also, for "in it we approach One God in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity; but it is remarkable as a great prayer directed, for the larger part of its extent, to Jesus Christ in His adorable, Incarnate Godhead." Putting it that way no doubt, will bring many people back to the fold; though what can even a moderately intelligent person think of learning to sing, "By Thine agony and bloody sweat, etc?" Personally it reminds us of a famous broadcast song about somebody in the "bloody" Tower.

Just as "modern science" is now admitting many of the "miracles" in the Bible to be absolutely true, so the spiritualists are now finding that many of the world-famous "antis" like Maskelyne and Houdini were really genuine spiritualists themselves, but only opposed spiritualism for the money that could be made by their opposition. An example is given by Mr. H. Fell, in the *Psychic News*, a few weeks back, who, quite calmly asserts that Houdini told him that the spirits of his father and grandfather helped him in his tricks. No class of people is more gullible than the Spiritualist, but this story is quite on a par with the "recantation" of Thomas Paine, or the story of Bradlaugh being converted on his death-bed.

Houdini told Mr. Fell that both his grandfather and father were able to perform similar tricks to his own, a piece of unmitigated nonsense. Houdini, apart from the fact that he was a genius in his special line, had a

long and arduous training as a magician and a locksmith; what training had his father, who was an Austrian Jewish Rabbi? Where are the records that Rabbi Weiss ever did any conjuring tricks—to say nothing of his father? But any idiotic story will do for Spiritualists.

In a review of Mr. Beverley Nichols' book *The Fool Hath Said*, Mr. Arnold Lunn says:—

If Mr. Nichols were to exchange controversial letters with flesh and blood opponents, he would soon discover that neither Atheists nor Militarists are as easily demolished as the Aunt Sallys he destroys in this book.

Mr. Lunn is certainly speaking from the heart—and hard experience.

Six "miraculous" cures are reported this year from Lourdes. They are all women—as indeed most of these cures are. They all had more or less incurable diseases which disappeared with one dip in the "holy" water. In his latest work, *Healing, Pagan and Christian*, Dr. G. G. Dawson examines the claims of the various religions, and we are pleased to note that "it is written from a strong anti-Catholic standpoint, which is particularly noticeable in the section of Lourdes." Dr. Dawson does not believe in "miraculous" cures and he explains the so-called cures at Lourdes as "the effect of subconscious suggestion, and 'herd influence' upon sensitive minds." Some of them, however, particularly the early ones, were unquestionable frauds of the worst kind. One would like to have the opinion of the thousands of sick people who have been to Lourdes, who have fervently prayed, who have been dipped innumerable times, and who are still not cured?

Mrs Margaret Harwood answers correspondence in a religious weekly. To do her justice she invariably tempers her piety with excellent commonsense. We imagine her limitations are due to her environment. Being asked about what we ourselves should irreverently call the obscene passages in the Bible, Mrs. Harwood answers with commendable frankness:—

The plain truth is that we have hardly any common sense about teaching children to love the Scriptures, and if certain stories and certain passages that are in the Old Testament were in any other collection of books we should be horrified at the very idea of allowing children to see them; we should hide them, push them behind the back of the bookcase or refuse to have them in the house.

Truth crushed to earth will rise again, but this is getting up in a hurry.

The "Freethinker" Circulation Drive

It is proposed to celebrate the coming-of-age of the present editorship by an attempt to create a substantial increase in the circulation of this paper. The plan suggested is:—

(1) Each interested reader is to take an extra copy for a period of twelve months, and to use this copy as a means of interesting a non-subscriber to the point of taking the *Freethinker* regularly.

(2) So soon as this new subscriber is secured, the extra copy may be dropped by the present subscriber. Until this is accomplished, he will regard the extra threepence weekly (for one year) as a fine for his want of success.

The plan is simple, and it is not costly; but it does mean a little work, and whether or not it is more blessed to give than to receive, it is certainly easier for most to give than it is to work. But in this case it is the work alone that will yield permanent benefit. There are many thousands of potential readers in the country; why not try and secure some of them?

THE FREETHINKER

FOUNDED BY G. W. FOOTÉ

61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4

Telephone No.: CENTRAL 2412.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

- G. WALLACE.—Thanks for what you are doing to introduce the *Freethinker* to your friends, and the quotations you give us from their letters. We hope we deserve their praise, but naturally we do not quite agree with their criticisms, but naturally we quite appreciate their points. But, after all, it must be remembered that the *Freethinker* is the *Freethinker* with a character and work of its own. And to that we may add with an influence which we think no other Freethought paper, as such, has ever had.
- G. WAITE (N.S.W.).—Pleased to receive your letter. It is very difficult to trust the popular press with an account of anything which offers profitable opportunities for misrepresentation.
- A. H. HANSON.—Yours was a very good letter, but one cannot expect even the *Manchester Guardian* to publish letters which constitute an attack on all established religion. If it was a letter written by a Catholic attacking Protestantism, or by a Protestant attacking Catholicism, or by an Agnostic attacking the biblical idea of God, but reserving the question of whether there might be some kind of a God somewhere or the other, any of these might gain admission. But a letter that is unmistakably anti-religious—well, that is quite another question.
- W. J. MEALOR.—Congratulations on having secured four new subscribers to the *Freethinker*. But we are still a long way off the 1,000. More activity wanted on Circulation Drive front.
- B. J. BAILEY.—Mr. Lindsay, as you will see in this issue, is replying to Mr. Cohen. A very brief reply from Mr. Cohen will follow, and that, for the present must close the discussion.
- "CISE CIRE".—Thanks for cuttings. It is curious how confident some people are about a future life, and how uncertain they are about easily ascertainable facts in connexion with this. We suppose that in the latter case the necessity of knowing what one talks about is understood; in the other the less one understands the more confident one can be.
- B. O'CONNELL.—The booklet to which you refer was not in the envelope.
- W. W. MEDLEY.—We can quite understand the Vicar of Killingholme's despair at the "ungodliness" of his parishioners. But why should he have expected that "patience, friendliness and good-will" would keep the people true to Christianity? Curious it has never struck him that the root of the trouble is not the unfriendliness of the vicar, but disbelief in Christian teachings. The difficulty is intellectual not social. And that cannot be overcome by a friendly pat on the back.
- T. OWEN.—Thanks for good wishes. We are taking as much care as we can, but have not yet reached where we should like to be. That will come, however.
- G. LEWIS.—There is no present intention of republishing the articles.
- Mr. T. MOSLEY calls our attention to a serious misprint in our reply to Mr. Jack Lindsay in the *Freethinker* for August 13. As printed, the passage reads, "Economic interests may work in such a way as to cause war, but it is for economic interests that the people fight wars." The word "not" was omitted after "but it is."
- D. BAGLE.—The English laws against witchcraft were repealed in 1736. The last execution for witchcraft was in 1712. There were several trials after that, but there was a growing feeling against the executions. In 1768 a protest against the disbelief in witchcraft was made by John Wesley, who said that it was equal to giving up the Bible. But the belief in some form or another still survives in this country, as well as in others.
- G. BEARD AND J. HAYES.—Many thanks for your efforts for new readers. Paper being sent for six weeks.
- A. WEBSTER.—We received your manuscript, but you omitted to enclose your address. Please send.
- W. FLETCHER.—No notice of meetings was received for publication.
- R. B. ROWLEY.—Pleased to know your appreciation of the *Freethinker*. Mr. Cohen values very highly the almost

personal relations that exist between him and his readers. W.R.E.—The point is an excellent one. Have passed it on. W.J.W.E.—The passage will be found in Hazlitt's edition of Luther's *Table Talk*, in Bohn's Library.

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.

Sugar Plums

Mr. Cohen will deliver his first lecture this autumn in the McLellan Galleries, Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, on October 4, on "Some Aspects of Life and Death." Tickets for the meeting may be had from Grant's Educational Company, Renfield Street, The Worker's Bookshop, High Street, or from the Branch Secretary, 351 Castlemilk Road, Glasgow. Chair will be taken at 7 o'clock.

The first edition of Mr. Cohen's pamphlet *Spain and the Church* is nearly sold out. An edition twice the size of the first one is now in the press. But the provinces do not appear to have yet risen to the occasion. We should like to see greater activity in this matter. The pamphlet serves as an excellent medium for getting into touch with new people.

The New York "Peace" monthly, called the *Arbitrator*, has far greater courage than such papers as our *Headway*, the organ of the League of Nations Union. *Headway* might just as well call itself the "Christianity and Peace Advocate." The *Arbitrator*, on the other hand finds that Christianity is an obstacle to Peace—and says so. It has had to face Christian opposition which it has met, not by running away, but by the following direct challenge which its Christian readers will not find easy to accept:—

The only reason we attack Christianity is because we are convinced that it represents a false plan for human salvation. If any doctrine of Christianity can be shown to rest upon an accurate historical basis, we will adopt and follow it. In return, we request the abandonment by Christians of whatever doctrines are based upon allegories.

To those who accept this challenge will be sent a list of Christian doctrines that must be substantiated or abandoned.

The American Civil Liberties Union has issued an indignant pamphlet: *The Strange Case of Mrs. Eaton*. It tells a fully documented story of the case against Mrs. Eaton, who after bringing a Divorce suit against her husband, a Methodist by religion, was deprived of the custody of her two little children on the ground of her religious and political opinions. The pamphlet reports the proceedings in Court. As Mrs. Eaton is an intelligent woman, a Freethinker, with radical political views perhaps, but only as a student, her replies to her impatient questioners (judge and opposing counsel) show her as wiser and better in every way than her enemies. On the political side her answers were crushing—she answered by a modest declaration that she was "not preaching Marx, but studying him." But on the religious side she had no way of meeting bigotry, but by a definite statement that she did not believe in God or in Christ. For this crime she, an admittedly good mother, is deprived of the custody of her two babies. And this is in New Jersey—within sight of Broadway, New York City, in the year 1936.

The Manchester Branch N.S.S. writes appreciatively of the good work done by Mr. G. Whitehead during his visit. The lectures were interesting, well attended, and provoked a good deal of useful discussion. To-day (September 20), Mr. Whitehead will be in Birmingham, and address meetings during the week. The local N.S.S. Branch will be on duty during the period, and unattached saints might make the visit the opportunity for a closer association with the Branch and its work. The rough and smooth of active Freethought propaganda add an enjoyable element to life missed by those without the experience.

The Materialist Basis

MUCH of the aim that I set myself in my way has already been achieved. I wished to start off among Rationalists a serious consideration of Marxism, and Mr. Chapman Cohen's interesting and able reply to me has pleased me considerably. With the majority of his comments I heartily assent. And what pleases me in this is that it shows, I think, the convergence of Liberal and Marxist ideas that is now going on. In my essay I had to treat many aspects too cavalierly through lack of space. In seeking to bring out the economic basis of liberal ideas of freedom, I hardly touched on the fact that one cannot isolate "liberal ideas" so simply. Ever since the Stoics were fired with the vision of ultimate brotherhood (a vision born materially from the cohering mercantilism of the Mediterranean area that resulted in the Roman Empire), the immediate fight for "liberty" (usually expressed by the effort of a class-section to grasp some withheld privilege) has been entangled with far-reaching impulses. These impulses materially had their origin in the expanding social organization; and though their call to brotherhood could not be actualized because of the lack of a world-mechanism of production, they were none the less real elements of progress.

For instance, our bourgeois revolution under Cromwell was concerned with getting rid of feudalist fetters; but at the same time it roused deeper hopes among the masses. Cromwell had no sooner settled the King than he had to suppress the democratic movements among his own followers. While bloodily crushing the Levellers, he asseverated that the "law of nature" could be carried too far. That is, freedom for him was the triumph of privilege for his own class, at that time the class which held the key of production.

Thus, the liberal movement, while seeking equality of rights in every area except the economic, was a tremendous step from feudalism; and it inevitably stirred mass-emotions that went beyond the liberal-economic objective. Many fighters for freedom could consequently feel entirely at home in liberal ideology, while they were carrying on the last portions of the fight against feudalism and its various bequests—in especial religion. But now that capitalism has passed its zenith and is in a state of virulent decay, there comes the test for the liberal. If he was liberal only because *laissez-faire* economic policy gave him a maximum chance of exploitation, then he will rapidly shrivel into the worst of reactionaries. On the contrary, if his liberalism were emotionally based on the wish for freedom and justice, and only incidentally involved in liberal economics and their cognate ideas, he will advance towards the new ideology of struggle, and, with whatever twinges felt during the transition, he will always be found in the last resort of choice on the side of the progressive forces.

I shall quote here some words by André Malraux:—

Liberalism and Communism are at variance on the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat, but not on the question of their respective values, since the dictatorship of the proletariat in the eyes of the Marxists is the concrete means of securing true democracy, all political democracy being a fallacy as long as it does not rest on economic democracy. . . . Again and again I have been struck by the fact that Fascist arts are utterly incapable of expressing anything except the struggle of man against man. When do you find in a Fascist country the equivalent of Soviet films or novels about the creation of a new world? . . . So that Fascist civilization in its last stage ends in a total militarization of the nation. . . . Now one soldier's enemy is another soldier, another man, whereas with Liberalism and Communism man's enemy is not man—it is the earth. (*Left Review*, July, 1936).

Mr. Cohen has given eloquent expression, in his pamphlet *Humanity and War*, to this notion that man can put aside the barbarity of war, and turn his "aggressiveness" to the struggle of mastery over the elements. It is my purpose here to argue that this notion can only be actualized by Communism. For the moment it is enough to point out that all that is finest in Liberalism joins hands with Communism in its ultimate purpose, and that both Liberalism and Communism are equally

opposed to the war-philosophy of Fascism with its racial fanaticisms.

First, one trivial matter. I think Mr. Cohen has misinterpreted the Soviet law on religion. There is no provision against Christians gathering together to worship; the law merely says that when the Christians in a given area dwindle to a third of the population, the State need no longer provide a building for them. Against this provision I am sure that Mr. Cohen would have no objection.

Now, to the general points of difference. It must be understood, of course, that I am going on to deal only with the matters in which I disagree with Mr. Cohen. The very substantial basis of agreement between us needs no emphasis. First, I do not accept the definition of Dialectical Materialism as "economic determinism." I think Mr. Cohen's point here is that which he makes further on: that though he accepts the general laws of dialectics relating to motion, process, development, and agrees with the Marxist that the scientist must seek to realize them in his work (not by abstract imposition, which would lead to a medieval petrification of research, but by ceaselessly deepening his objective sense of the relations implicated), yet he disagrees when the Marxist claims to have concretely discovered the dialectical laws of social-economic process. It is not, therefore, in Materialist principles that there is any disagreement. It is more in question whether Marx-Engels-Lenin made a dialectically sound analysis of capitalist society. It is for this reason, I take it, that Mr. Cohen calls Marxist Materialism "economic determinism."

Yet he himself quotes, in admirably elucidating a quotation of mine from Marx, a passage from Engels, in which a plea is made for dialectical fullness of analysis and a disclaimer is made that Marxism means piling everything on to the economic aspects. Mr. Cohen is, therefore, in entire sympathy with the aim of Marx and Engels. He merely questions whether they followed out their own principles in concentrating "for strategic reasons" on the economic analysis.

However Mr. Cohen goes too far if he takes this passage from Engels—and many similar ones could be added—as meaning that Engels was recanting in any way. Engels was simply stating that much work remained to be done—and it still remains—in analysing the inter-relations of the social, economic, psychological, æsthetic, etc., elements which combine to make up the human whole. Also he was protesting against disciples who sought to abstract an economic yardstick out of *Capital* for the evaluation of all human phenomena whatever. But he was not recanting a single word of the Marxist analysis already made.

His warning against false simplification cannot be remembered too often; but these passages of his are too often quoted by those who wish to evade the primary economic analysis instead of wishing to deepen and subtilize it—the aim that Engels had in mind. For instance, E. F. Carr in *Aspects of Dialectical Materialism* (Watts), or James T. Farrell in *A Note on Literary Criticism* (Constable).

Before I pass on, let me say that Mr. Cohen's analysis of the sentence I quoted from Marx is quite correct. Marx did not mean that the mental was a passive reflection for the material; he and Engels were always aware that the mental construction reacted back on the material of its origin, and that socially and individually an extremely complex set of relations was created—mental and material being inextricably merged in continued action and reaction. But he insisted, and this is fundamental to Marxism, that if we lose sight of the Materialist basis, we at once falsify relations, upend them into some shape of "idealism," teleological, religious.

It will be clear then that Marx would not have quarrelled with much that Mr. Cohen urges. He would merely answer that in the last resort the relationship of men in terms of the developing productive-mechanism is what makes history—that there is the concrete human fact on which any materialist analysis must ultimately base itself.

The problem then comes down to the simple question: Did Marx and Engels apply their materialism soundly? did they truly understand history?

Mr. Cohen admits that economics is not his strong point; and I think that his readers will agree that his finest work is to be found in the psychological area, in books such as his *Religion and Sex*. To show where I as a Marxist think that he has missed the economic clue, I shall begin by considering a remark of his, which, though shrewd, is dialectically fallacious. He says:—

The thesis, antithesis and synthesis are always at work, whether in the direction of Communism or away from it. But it may develop away as well as towards. In Italy or Germany it has produced Fascism, and it is conceivable that it might even give rise to a purely slave State. And it is noticeable that the one country in which a form of Communism has been established has not passed through a capitalistic development at all.

First, to say that the dialectical process might produce either Fascism or Communism shows a failure to grasp the Marxist conception of wholes. The "whole" here is Capitalism, of which Fascism is the extreme and decadent form; the transformation of the capitalist "whole" can only occur in terms of that which fully negates capitalism.

Again, this negation of capitalism cannot be a reversion to serfdom, medievalism, all that I understand Mr. Cohen to comprehend under the term "slave-state." If one considers only the political and psychological aspects, such a reversion seems extremely likely. For the whole ideology of Hitlerism, for instance, is medieval, and if it could continue to function in an isolated area it would finally revert to sheer barbarism and small-village economy.

But that "if" gives the show away. The Marxist dialectic insists on the consideration of *all* the facts before it generalizes on the "whole." Now, the chief facts of capitalism are that it has developed unequally, and that its advanced forms have already become monopolistic and imperialist. Capital is organized in rival groups, and its common interests against the workers are balanced by irreconcilable rivalries. The extreme form of monopoly-capitalism is the Fascist state; but here we see capitalism in violent decay, its creative energies are gone, nothing remains but the building-up of a war-machine. Consequently, if unchecked, capitalism can do nothing but inpotently breed terrific conflicts. Having no power of internal growth, the Fascist state must expand; and when several imperialisms feel this need all at once, the possibilities are unspeakably hellish. Capitalism itself is utterly incapable of checking these tendencies.

But there are other factors: the workers, who are not content to be used as cannon-fodder, and who are increasingly aware of themselves as capable of building a nobler social order, of freeing the productive mechanism from its present impasse.

JACK LINDSAY.

(To be continued)

Blessed be the Meek

CHRISTIAN: "It is unquestionable that the Bible is the source of England's greatness."

Sceptic: "That is a very old joke. Is it so amusing that it is worth repeating?"

C.: "It is not a joke, but a solemn fact. Do you maintain that England would have become the mighty power she is if she had not appointed the Bible her guide?"

S.: "I do. The greatness of a nation is in a large measure influenced by its geographical position, climate, soil, and other secular circumstances that shape and control the lives of its people. Religion plays an unimportant part in the process."

C.: "I do not agree. If England adhere to the Bible, the book that fills the future with hope, she will remain a mighty force in the world. Abandonment will mean her decay."

S.: "Spain and Portugal, once powerful nations, have adhered to the Bible for centuries. How do you explain their decadence? What greatness has Abyssinia achieved

by her loyalty to the Bible? Russia has virtually abandoned the Bible, yet she now appears to be on the eve of an era of prosperity, despite the dire predictions of her Christian detractors. Germany is weary of the shackles of dogmatic religion, and is in a mood to cast them off. Does anyone except a bigot believe that such a step would retard the progress of this intelligent and virile people? What is the source of Japan's meteoric advance in recent years? It cannot be the Bible.

C.: "Your arguments do not impress me. Many books and treatises written by learned divines and others support my contention."

S.: "Whenever learned Christian divines and other orthodox Christians expound their views on Christianity they usually permit their faith to overrule their reason. As you are probably aware, in the past they have stontly clauptioned the claim that the earth is flat; have competed, one with the other, with a view to proving that the language spoken in the mythical Garden of Eden was either Hebrew, Dutch or something else, and have solemnly sustained the now discarded belief that the world was created in 4004 B.C., one, an English Bishop, even going to the absurd length of fixing the exact hour and day! These are merely a few of their many mistakes. I recommend you to abandon the 'learned divine' argument."

C.: "Whatever you may say does not shake my belief that the Bible is responsible for all the good accomplished in the Christian world."

S.: "I believe that most of it has been done in spite of the Bible, for example, the emancipation of the slaves; the abandonment of witch-burning; and the improvements in social conditions, without mentioning many other less important reforms. If you will consult the Bible you will find that the Old Testament countenances slavery, and in the New Testament there is no repealing enactment. In the New Testament it is decreed that witches should not be permitted to live, and in the same book it is implied that it is wrong to resist poverty."

C.: "Presumably you do not admit that it is the inspired word of God?"

S.: "As there is not the least particle of evidence to prove that what is termed, "divine inspiration" is not a figment of the imagination, and in view of the contradictory descriptions of the same events recorded by different 'inspired' writers, the unbelievable horrors, and the absurd and impossible events in the book, I consider the claim of divine inspiration reaches the limit of human absurdity."

C.: "You are groping in darkness. Perhaps you will admit that the ethics of the Sermon on the Mount are perfect?"

S.: "I admit that some are excellent, but others, among them being loving your enemies, turning the other cheek, taking no heed of the morrow, and the unfulfilled promise to the meek, are manifestly absurd. You must not forget that many of the precepts credited to Christ by his dubious biographers, including the Golden Rule, were borrowed from sayings current long before the Christian era."

C.: "Why do you say that these teachings are absurd?"

S.: "Because not only are they utterly opposed to reason, but they are impossible to follow without sacrificing sanity. Christians never attempt to obey them, and it is some satisfaction to know they never will. By the way, I notice you have hitherto been silent on the question of the Bible's attitude to war."

C.: "Obviously it teaches peace."

S.: "I cannot agree. It teems with details of wars and massacres under the auspices of Jehovah. The "Lord of Hosts," the "Lord mighty in battle," appears to take more interest in war than in the pursuit of peace."

C.: "You have evidently forgotten what Christ said in the New Testament about those who drew the sword perishing by the sword."

S.: "And you have apparently overlooked Christ's words in the same book, 'Think not that I am come to send peace on earth. I come not to send peace, but a sword.' I have knowledge of instances during the Peace Ballot of people refusing to sign the forms, giving as their reason, that these words proved beyond doubt that

the Almighty was not opposed to war. The tenor of the Bible undoubtedly favours war. If it had been cast from a more pacific mould, the Christian world would have been spared the horrors of the Crusades, and other religious wars. Should the nations of the world, in the process of evolution, ever attain complete sanity and abolish war, the Bible will not be entitled to any of the credit."

C.: "Has the Bible no redeeming features?"

S.: "Its redeeming features are completely overshadowed by its grave blemishes. It is responsible for the religious persecutions, disturbances and wars which have disgraced Christianity from time immemorial; it founded the Inquisition; it has retarded the progress of science; it makes credulity a virtue, and the use of reason a crime; it exalts lying prophets and so-called saints, and degrades rational thinkers; it contains details of unsavoury incidents unfit for publication; it teaches the doctrine of children designedly enduring the sins of their parents; and it preaches the terrifying dogma of eternal damnation. I cannot see that it has been of benefit to mankind; in fact I think the world would have been happier if the book had never been fabricated."

PRO REASON.

Hedonism up to Date

HAPPINESS is so hard to define and so difficult to classify that its full expression and signification has escaped the complete comprehension of philosophers throughout the ages. To-day there are more than 2,000,000,000 human beings on the face of the earth, and to no two of them does happiness convey quite the same meaning.

Some may find it in the woods and in the Arcadian beauty of rural surroundings; some may find it in the friendly lights of the town; or again others may find it in both, and there are those who find it in neither. Some find pleasure in reading, in music, at the cinema, on the stage, or in sport, but again, in these specialities no two tastes are entirely alike. Indeed, happiness is to be found in all that is beautiful; the only true definition of beauty is that which provides happiness and the only true definition of ugliness is that which does not.

To the Greeks, and above all to the Athenians and their allies, we owe the true foundation of ethical philosophy. In the five schools of Cynicism, Hedonism, Megarianism, Scepticism and Stoicism we possess the basis of a general classification embracing all schools of thought, for in them we discover the basic principles of all ethical, philosophical and religious systems.

The cynic sees vice in every human activity and, like Diogenes that master of cynics, sees happiness only in seclusion from the world and its evil. The stoic seeks tranquility of mind gained by the complete denial of both pleasure and pain; to the stoic, as to the cynic, life is hard, and human nature both weak and evil.

The Megarian is essentially a mystic, seeking happiness in the supposed existence of the supernatural and identifying virtue with the hidden secret of the universe. Earthly and positive happiness to this school represents little beyond the attainment of this type of mystic virtue.

There is something in common between hedonist and sceptic; to both does happiness possess a similar value, as something not dependent upon supernatural intervention, the self-seclusion of the ascetic and the hermit or the stoical subordination in individuality.

However, this resemblance is far from absolute. Pyrrho, founder of sceptic philosophy, thought that certainty of knowledge is unobtainable, and while it must be admitted, this is correct when applied to the fundamental secrets of the universe, it does not apply, in fact, to what Herbert Spencer termed the knowable as opposed to the unknowable; the correct boundary between which it would be impossible to ascertain.

It is the knowledge of the knowable which serves as the basis of civilization and, if we admit the truism that culture is the soul of civilization, then it becomes more than ever evident that culture (which is in reality free-

dom of action in both an altruistic and egoistic sense) can only be obtained by the certainty of knowledge, or search for certainty of knowledge, at least in those spheres of nature directly affecting humanity.

Pyrrhonic scepticism is more than anything else transitional, and a preliminary step towards positive and rational knowledge as a reaction against theology and dogma. Scepticism (as opposed to rationalism which is positive) represents the open mind freed from superstition and error, but still searching for reason and truth. With the achievement of scientific certainty in biology, philosophy and other fields, scepticism as such ceases to exist.

Since true culture relies upon the freedom of the individual, it is necessary to investigate that system of philosophy which elevates personal freedom and happiness to the rank of a fundamental doctrine; that is to say hedonism.

This school of philosophy can properly be divided into two parties: the Cyrenaic and the Epicurean; the former being purely egoistic and representative of the doctrine expressed in the formula "Every man for himself," and the latter being a combination of egoism and altruism as expressed in the formula "Live and let live."

The philosophy of the individual must, to be logical, recognize the sacred rights of every individual. In this it is completely opposed to the self-styled "individualism" of the Spencerian-Benthamite-Manchesterian school, which is in actuality directly opposed to the true principles of the Natural Selection of Species. The terms "survival of the fittest" and "struggle for existence," both highly misleading and psychologically objectionable, are certainly not to be applied between members of the same species and humanity is unquestionably a single biological unit with slight physical variations.

John Stuart Mill established as a fundamental principle, that every individual should possess the freedom to follow his own desires and inclinations so long as these should not thereby interfere with, or transgress upon, the freedom and rights of others. The main difficulty, of course, lies in defining exactly which personal actions do or do not interfere with the freedom or happiness of others; although such a definition is obviously essential.

On the roads, for example, the freedom of the motorist in the car, in addition to his personal safety, must be taken into account with the freedom and safety of other road users and pedestrians. In industry and commerce freedom of enterprise must be tempered and taken into account with the necessity of personal and economic freedom and justice for all concerned.

Accepting as vital the hedonist doctrine of life for the pursuit of happiness on the Epicurean interpretation of personal rights to happiness for all as being the basis of true individualism, we must now consider the question of personal and economic freedom gained through the possession of property and wealth and personal and economic serfdom arising from the lack of these essentials.

Money cannot necessarily buy happiness, but lack of it is certainly a big obstacle to the enjoyment of many pleasures of life. Money cannot necessarily purchase health and strength, but lack of it too often means the lack of those things by which these benefits can be obtained. Money cannot purchase brains, but it can provide for their development, and for the utilization of their ability.

The person with neither wealth nor property cannot be truly free for this is to lack the guarantee of liberty, the means of independence, the hopes of freedom and preservation in the future, and the first fortification of security. The Socialist who would nationalize everything and reduce everyone to poverty and State servitude; the *laissez faire* industrialist who would let the strong and the brutal share the riches of the earth with the weak and considerate driven to the wall, and the Fascist or Absolutist, who would subordinate individual desire and happiness to the tyranny of the authoritarian state, are all the enemies and opponents of every man-

festation of libertarian happiness, on which depends the happiness and welfare of the human race.

With regard to this matter I do not overlook the roaming vagabond psychology which finds pleasure in the nomad wandering life of the tramp and the gipsy, apparently scornful of personal opulence, and without the desire for any other but the most rudimentary of personal goods or even the comforts and security of a home.

Freedom, even for these people, depends upon lack of obligation to economic servitude; while it might be said that, apart from habitual or racial vagabondage, which time will no doubt eliminate, the homeless rover is generally driven to this existence through financial or other domestic and social reasons.

In *What is Man?* which book represents the serious considerations on life of that greatest of American humorists, Mark Twain, the author gives, in the form of a dialogue, a notable treatise on hedonist, epicurean and ego-altruistic individualism. In this book, Mark Twain illustrates his theorem that the acts and movements of the individual are, as a first consideration, in obedience to the desires of the ego.

Deeds of valour, charity or determination; deeds of self and personal advantage; deeds of submission to authority, tradition or public opinion; deeds of cruelty, hatred or barbarism, in fact the whole range of conscious and sub-conscious activity, all fall within the area of this generalization. Even the Hindu ascetic or gymnosophist, who lies down on his bed of spikes, or voluntarily deprives himself of the use of his arms or legs, does so in the hope of thus gaining heavenly reward.

Briefly, all individual acts can be divided into three classes: beneficial, harmful and neutral; a factor which makes apparent the truism that the aim of social philosophy should be to eliminate all activity of a harmful nature, or to supersede it by that which is beneficial, or at least neutral; again the difficulty lies in the drawing of a clear distinction.

A distinction must then be drawn between egoism and egotism; for while the former merely represents personal thought or actions for the benefit of self, the latter represents care for self only. Egotism and altruism are direct opposites, one cannot survive in the presence of the other; egotism and altruism on the other hand, form an essential combination in the form of ego-altruism, basing its philosophy on consideration and movement for the benefit of both self and others.

This school of epicurean-hedonism recognizes that those puritan reformers who would, as they say, "eliminate the word 'self' from the dictionary," are teaching a doctrine which is not only impossible, but as dangerous as one which teaches self only. To subordinate personality to the mass or the state is to provide a nation of slaves with all the intolerant servility of the Bolshevik, the Fascist or the Nazi.

True happiness rests on the harmonious union of altruism with egoism; syncretising the attainment of personal hopes and desires with respect, help and consideration for the hopes, desires and freedom of others.

AUBREY BUSH.

The fault of most writers on criminals is that they study only convicts. This is wrong from several points of view. (1) The convict is a criminal who is unlucky enough and clumsy enough to get caught; and this gives us a misleading idea of the mentality of the criminal. (2) We cannot get the number of criminals in any society because the majority go uncaught. (3) A low degree of intelligence in the criminal is assumed because the one who becomes a convict is caught, whereas it may only mean that the one who is caught lacks the intelligence that enables another criminal to keep out of prison. (4) "Criminality" ought to be considered from the point of view of the consequences of action on the community, not from the inability of a man to dodge a policeman. (5) But to catalogue the criminal along the lines indicated, and to punish him, would probably mean building more prisons than the country can afford to carry out a programme of rearmament.

"Lord's Day" Hypocrisy

THE Lord's Day Observance Society congratulates itself regularly on its success in forcing people to obey its orders. Wielding a most amazing influence with councillors and M.P.s, it goes from power to power, leaving behind it a trail of miserable gloomy Sundays.

This it looks upon as the work of the Lord. But the Lord never gave sanction to dictatorship by man over man. If the Lord stood for anything, he always stood for the right of each of His creatures to live his or her life. The hypocrisy of people who use the Name of the Lord to justify their nose-poking interference with others is blatant.

And when it is allied with the fact that such people are quite impervious to the commands of the Lord to be just and honest, it smells strongly of corruption.

You may not play a game on a Sunday, say these snivelling dictators. You may not be entertained on a Sunday (save by the accredited parson, if what most of them give out can be looked upon as either entertainment or instruction). You may not do anything on a Sunday, except what the Lord's Day Observance Society say you must do. And they see to it—through their remarkable grip over craven-hearted public men or silly bigots—that you are allowed as little scope to live your life as they can manage.

But you may steal—if you are on the law's side (though not on the Lord's). You may enslave your brother, rob your brother, subject the weak and the helpless, use the fatherless and the motherless for your own illicit profit, and disobey the laws of the Lord any way you like. And the Lord's Day Observance Society will pass you as O.K. The only law they are concerned with is that of their own miserable desire to dictate to their fellows. The essential commands of their Lord they ignore, if they do not actually disobey.

Herbert Henry Martin is the secretary of this nose-poking organization. He is always glad to be able to report that someone or other has been forced to heel by the Society's activities. And he has been delighted to report that the children in various areas are to be disallowed from having "Sunday games." He writes: "Sunday games are a subtle means of secularizing the hallowed hours of the Lord's Day, and there can be no gainsaying the fact that they strike a blow at the good work of the Sunday schools." And he goes on to quote a list of two towns (one in Wales and the other in England) where he or his society have succeeded in preventing the children from playing on a Sunday, saying that such news must "gladden the hearts of all our friends."

This kind of stuff sickens one. It is sanctimonious and horrible to a degree. Who could be glad about it is a poor specimen of humanity.

Sunday games for children are what they are any other day of the week—games, enjoyment, play. There are no "subtle means" about the matter. Children are not influenced by "subtle means" in the matter of playing. They always want to play, and God knows they get little enough chance to do so in peace, without Martin shoving his nose into their affairs, and making that chance less. As for the "hallowed hours of the Lord's Day," this is of all statements the most blasphemous.

All the week, every hour of it, there are people being robbed and denied their right to the Earth that is the Lord's. Every minute of the Lord's time is being used by a few, to rob the Lord's children. The gifts of nature are grabbed by land-lords, and these see to it that no child (other than their own) gets at them. Children are living in horrible slums through this denial of the Lord's law that the earth is for the children of man. They are choking and starving in the sight of their God, on Sunday and on all days. Yet Martin talks about "hallowed." There is nothing holy about the way children are being treated. They are being betrayed by men, against the laws of the Lord whom Martin and his kind profess to obey and worship.

This work—this foul work—is none of the Lord's making. But the Lord's Day Observance Society would have it go on, and would add to it by further restricting

the children's liberty. To call the condition as it is "hallowed," merely because it suits Martin and his crowd, and to make out that children playing on a Sunday is a crime, is utterly blasphemous. And it shows how much these people think of their supposed Lord.

The "blow" that is being struck is that which forces children to live unnatural lives—not any that might aim to release them. This "blow" is being struck all the time, with cruelty and callousness; and while it is being struck, there can be no assumption that the Lord is being obeyed. He is being betrayed, and his Law mocked at—by some of those very people who make such a noise about "His Day."

If Martin were as much concerned with the Lord's Law as he makes out to be with the "Lord's Day," he would start to get down to applying the basic justice that the Lord commands. He would be engaged in demanding the right of the children (and their adults) to the earth and the fruits of the earth.

He wants to force children to go to "Sunday schools," does he? He would make it so difficult to do anything else, that he would drive all the children into the hands of those who blasphemously regard themselves as the particular persons selected to carry out the Lord's Law (and who consistently fail to do so).

Let Martin learn this: The whole world is a school, and whatever anyone may do in it, so long as he or she is not committing injustice, is as much the work of the Lord as anything else, and is as justified, and as instructive. The conceit of people speaking of schools which teach a lot which is vague and useless, though perhaps also something which is good, as though such places were especially favoured of the Lord, is another instance of the blasphemous way in which bigots regard the Lord's plan.

It can be safely said that these people who are always interfering with others are servants of the Devil, for they do more evil by their acts and words than can be calculated. They would have children grow up tied up and wrapped up like mummies, if they had their unobstructed way. They would stifle the very breath of life in the throats of God's own children.

And then they would praise "their" Lord for doing it!

Whatever anyone wants to do on any day (all days are the Lord's, if it comes to any point of controversy), is their own business, not Martin's. And if this person and his crowd of supporters were to just get down to some sort of examination of their own lives, they would perhaps find that they are more stained in the real offences than many of those they want to dictate to. But even if they were not, they have to learn one lesson: Mind your own business.

If they do that, they will have all they can manage to do in the way of serving the Lord (whatever that may mean in essence; it can only mean doing justice in my opinion).

When Martin and the Lord's Day Observance Society have helped to establish the restoration of the earth to its inhabitants, by supporting the plan of collecting land-rent for public services and abolishing rates and taxes, they will be able to say: Thank the Lord. As they are, they may as well say: To Hell with the Lord. For that is where they would have Him be, and His works and children with Him.

What is wanted is plain honest justice and liberty. And that is what the Lord wants. For the Lord is the conscience of man.

ERIC R. JONES.

SOCRATES

He was the declared questioner of all men who were renowned for wisdom, or any intellectual eminence; and they were sometimes puzzled by their questioner. Who is he?—Socrates, the son of Sophroniscus. What does he?—Converse. For what purpose?—To expose error. Simply that?—That and no more. Has he no truth to put in place of error?—None; except the truth that man is ignorant and fancies himself wise.

G. H. Lewes.

Correspondence

SORCERY IN SAVAGE SOCIETY

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER"

SIR,—May I crave space in your columns to reply to Mr. Palmer, who is very confused in regard to "Bantu" peoples. The term "Bantu" includes, among others, the Amazulu, Amampondo, and the Basuto people whom he mentions as being apart. Kaffirs (a name generally given to the Amaxosa) are also of "Bantu" stock. The term Kafir or Caffir, meaning infidel or unbeliever, is of Mohammedan origin, and was applied to all non-Moslem peoples thus, Mr. Palmer, himself, cannot escape the implication. To the "Bantu" it is a meaningless word. Moreover, it is a gross injustice to refer to these people as *Savages* in any sense of the word.

Smelling out is the prerogative of the Witch Doctor whom, during my stay in Pondoland, I observed at his diabolical work. His victims are not necessarily Sorcerers, but are frequently quite innocent people whose doom is brought about through jealousy. Serious cases, involving death, are to-day, however, very rare among the "Bantu," thanks to the untiring vigilance of the authorities.

W. H. RANSON.

LUCRETIUS

SIR,—I write a short note to thank you for so generously publishing my letter on the topic of Lucretius. I am quite prepared to leave the matter where it is, and I am glad to think that there is so little to separate two whose joint interest is the cause of Rationalism.

A. G. CARDEW.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

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

LONDON

INDOOR

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1): 11.0, S. K. Ratcliffe—"Ourselves and the Spanish Crisis."

OUTDOOR

BETHNAL GREEN AND HACKNEY BRANCH N.S.S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand): 3.15, Mr. C. Tuson.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES (The Market): 7.0, Mr. R. H. Rosetti—A Lecture.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (White Stone Pond, Hampstead): 11.30, Mr. L. Ebury. Highbury Corner, 8.0, Mr. L. Ebury. South Hill Park, Hampstead, 8.0, Monday, September 21, Mr. L. Ebury.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Brockwell Park): 6.0, Mr. H. Preece. Rushcroft Road, Brixton, 8.0, Tuesday, September 22, A Lecture. Cock Pond, Clapham, 8.0, Friday, September 25, Mr. L. Ebury.

WEST HAM BRANCH N.S.S. (Corner of Deanery Road, Water Lane, Stratford, E.): 7.0, A Lecture.

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

COUNTRY

OUTDOOR.

ASHINGTON (Grand Corner): 7.0, Friday, September 18, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

BIRKENHEAD (Wital) BRANCH N.S.S. (Well Lane): 8.0, Tuesday, Mr. D. Robinson, A Lecture. Literature on sale.

BLACKBURN BRANCH N.S.S. (Market): 3.0 and 7.0, Mr. J. V. Shortt (Liverpool). Literature for sale

(Continued on page 607)

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(Continued from page 606)

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