

THE FREETHINKER

• EDITED by CHAPMAN COHEN •

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

Views and Opinions

Suffer Little Children

To capable students of history there will be nothing startling in the statement that the discovery of the child is quite a modern event. Love for children is, of course, as old as the human race; older, for it is a direct heritage from the animal world. But until quite recent times the world was a place designed and maintained for adults. The adults made the rules; the children obeyed them. The duty of the child was to obey parents, to do as they were bid, and to grow up as nearly as might be duplicates of their parents, who were, by a cock-eyed process of reasoning, to be regarded as benefactors because they had brought children into the world. The Old Testament, which *does* notice the family, as distinct from the New Testament which substantially ignores it, has a deal to say about children honouring their parents, but it says nothing about parents returning the compliment to children. *Honour thy father and thy mother* is one of the ten commandments, but it leaves out the honour that should be paid by the parent to the child. For many, many generations the game went on. Children were born, had to be born, they were objects of affection, as the young have always been to parents, and of curiosity for their interesting manners. But the individuality of the child was little considered. It was the humanitarian developments of the late eighteenth century, an influence strongly non-religious in character, that placed the child in an altered position, exhibited it in a new light, and made tentative assertions of the child's right to a measure of independence. The finishing stroke came with the growth of the doctrine of evolution. In the light of that theory the child became more than an instrument to perpetuate the name and standing of its parents, although that is a view which still has considerable force with the aristocracy and royalty. These classes are usually nearer the primitive than the better part of the ordinary population. The child began to assume individuality, with

"rights" of its own. The parent was transformed into a guardian with important duties. One might say that the last century was pre-eminently the century of the child.

* * *

A Use for Children

But about the time that the child was discovered by sociologists and philosophers, another development affected a large body of the Christian and other parents of this country. The English factory system was born. The child, at least the child belonging to the poor, became a money-making object. He, or she, for in this direction the Christian world drew no such sex-distinction as obtained in other directions, could earn money; very little for themselves, considerably more for their godly employers. Parents sent them into the factories or down the pits, working for ten, twelve, or fourteen hours per day for two or three shillings per week. Those children who were without parents were sent by cartloads to be "apprenticed" to their employers. There was no Sunday labour. It must be said in favour of the godly employer who could see children of seven working very long hours every day, ill-fed and ill-clothed, that he did not permit them to break the Sabbath. Had these employers been alive to-day they would have been strong opponents of Sunday Cinemas, and Sunday games.

In the mine—I have, as will be seen, a special reason for mentioning the mines—boys and girls from seven upward were employed in different kinds of labour. A girl of eight told the "Children's Employment Commission" of 1842, that she went down the pit at four in the morning and remained there until five or half-past five in the evening. But there were limits to the labour performed, for a doctor informed the Commission that "There are very few under six or seven who are employed to draw weights with a girdle round the body." One marvels at the thoughtfulness shown by this limitation, but after all they were Christian employers, not people brought up without a knowledge of God. It might have been worse, and we do not wonder that in one of Watts's "Hymns for Infants," there is one in which the youngster thanks God that "I am an English child." In other countries it might have been badly treated.

* * *

God and the Child

I was reminded of the life led by children—particularly young girls—in mines by a cutting from a Yorkshire paper that one of my readers has been good enough to send me. On July 4, 1838, an accident occurred in the Silkstone pit, Yorks. A monument to the victims was erected in the entrance to Silkstone Church. The inscription on it is worth reading. Here it is:—

THIS MONUMENT

Was erected to perpetuate the remembrance of an awful visitation of the Almighty which took place

in this parish on the 4th day of July, 1838.

On that eventful day the Lord sent forth his Thunder, Lightning, Hail and Rain, carrying devastation before them, and by a sudden eruption of water into the coal pits of R. C. Clarke, Esq., twenty-six human beings whose names are recorded here were suddenly Summoned to appear before their Maker

READER REMEMBER

Every neglected call of God, will appear against Thee
AT THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

Let this Solemn Warning then sink deep into thy heart.
And so prepare thee that the Lord when He cometh may
find thee

WATCHING

It is a long time since I read a more eloquent, a more Christian, a more damning document than this. Its language is plain, its implications unmistakable. It is really a great historical document. It was born of a people that had for some half a hundred generations been cradled by the Christian Church; a people who had been told, and who believed, that God decreed all, a God who said "Suffer little Children to come unto me," and the practising Christian added the practical commentary, "And I will send them down the mine, and into the factory, and crawling up chimneys, and endow them with bruised and deformed bodies and undeveloped minds, and see that they grow up faithful followers of the Christian religion." It was a religious age, with Methodism growing in strength and wealth, with great missionary societies striving for the conversion of the heathen, with a House of Commons so pious that it would not tolerate a Roman Catholic, or a Jew, or an Atheist within its portals; with Sabbatarianism at its strongest; so strong that it gave to these little white slaves a full day's rest on Sunday in order that they might remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy, and might thank God for being so fortunate as to be born in Christian England. That the millowner and the mineowner could so sacrifice a whole day's profit every week bore testimony to how valuable in their eyes was the Christian religion.

There is not a detail of consequence that is omitted. The monument contains a complete list of the names and ages of those who were killed. Joseph Burkenshaw aged seven, Sarah Newton, aged eight, George Gerton aged nine, and so forth. Of the twenty-six, eleven were girls, and sixteen were under twelve years of age. Everyone, of course, regretted the disaster. The parents of the children carried with them for life the sense of the loss they had sustained. The surviving children would miss their companions, who with themselves had helped to make England one of the wealthiest countries in the world. The mineowners would note the cost of repairs in the pit, and the incentive the disaster would give to Chartists and others to demand what they were pleased to call reforms. Here and there one might even question the goodness of God. But the monument in the entrance to Silkstone Church takes not the least notice of the *crime* of the occurrence. It does not hint that there was more than an accident in this occurrence, that it might be called, with no gross exaggeration, murder. Infanticide has always been an offence on which the Christian State has come down very heavily. To kill a newly born baby was an unmistakable crime. But to permit a child to grow to seven years of age, when it was able to go into a coal-pit, or into a factory, and then bring about its death—that was no crime, and the Christian conscience drew a very sharp line between the two cases.

And lest there should be any doubt on the matter

the monument is quick to draw the true Christian moral from the occasion. It was an "awful visitation" of God. It was God who sent his "Thunder, Lightning, Hail, and Rain" as a summons for this twenty-six to appear before their maker. And the moral? That also is set forth. Every reader of the monument is exhorted that every neglected call of God will be brought up against him at the "Day of Judgment." That is the "solemn warning." There is no consciousness of the villainy of sending little children down the pits for twelve or fourteen hours every day, so that for months in each year they would hardly know what sunshine was like. That was taken as part of normal life. No human being was to blame. The whole responsibility is placed with God. He did it. He did not do it to warn the children; they were killed. It must have been to warn the survivors. And those who accepted the message aright, and who for the rest of their lives remembered that the Lord might "call" them at any time, would be prepared and when "He cometh" He would find them "Watching." And these saved souls would say with fervour—in fact, if not in so many words—"Thank God for sending his Thunder and Hail and Lightning, and for permitting the twenty-six children to be killed, for these have led to my salvation." The monument is very clear in its message. The "awful visitation" was God's way of calling attention to the fact that he was there.

So it is suggested that there shall in July be a commemoration service in Silkstone. The Vicar sees no objection, and the commemoration will probably come off. Unless it happens that the Vicar should consider that the ceremony might in 1938 be a little risky. To commemorate is to hold some person or some event in honour, and it is possible that some people may ask what it is they are holding in honour and wish to remember. Is it that twenty-six children were killed in 1838, and that it was veritably an "act of God," and that God did it in order to warn certain unnamed persons that they must get ready for him when he calls them? Are they commemorating the fact that in Christian England, in 1838, the murder of thousands of children for sheer gain was sanctioned by both law and custom, by Church and State, and that much of the wealth of the Church came from this child slavery? And that the fortunes of some of our nobility have been built on this child murder? People when they are commemorating must commemorate something. What is it they will be commemorating?

I think, if I were the Vicar, I should be inclined to discourage this particular commemoration of "God's visitation."

CHAPMAN COHEN.

Cleopatra's Needle

THE sun has made the river running gold,
Golden the boats, and gleams
Of amber light play on the workers' faces
As their feet plod on to toil.
The Needle, mute history
To those who do not know how to
Decipher cunning runes
That tell of a few pages in eternity
Has become a magnificent perch,
A magnificent perch this morning
For a living seagull
On its thrust up point.
The bird knows not a jot of history
And does not care a twopenny damn
About Cleopatra, the shape of her nose,
Or her goings on.
I think it is whimsical.

NICHOLAS MERE.

Filleted Faith

"The conscience of the race is rising above the Christian religion."—*John Morley.*

"Mankind in the mass thinks slowly."

H. W. Nevinson.

THE Christian clergy are getting ashamed of the Oriental superstition they preach—for a consideration. The money is good, but the antiquated ideas are not good enough. The clergy are really scared that their audiences will find out the truth of this matter. Camouflage has become the order of the day. Thus the priesthood circle round their idol, waving their censers and shouting their hymns of praise, while their ample draperies effectively hide from the public eye the barbarous object in the centre of the moving throng. It is a deliberate and organized attempt in the interest of a huge vested institution to conceal what any civilized person might think unbecoming and unsuitable for the twentieth century.

For near two thousand years the Christian priests have contended that their Bible is the finest and greatest book in the world, despite the drastic criticisms of the Freethinkers. The continued attacks of the intellectuals are beginning to tell heavily, and the clergy are getting really nervous. Some time since the House of Convocation of Canterbury of the Church of England decided to eliminate some of the worst features of their Bible in order to save their faces, and they started with the "Psalms." The priestly manoeuvre will not save the Christian religion, but the clergy hope that, for a time, their salaries will be safeguarded, and the critics will be evaded.

The ruse is a smart one, but it will not serve for long. The "Psalms" are an integral part of their Bible, and David, "the man after God's own heart," is too closely allied with the legendary figure of Christ to be thrown thus rudely to the rubbish-heap without disastrous results to orthodoxy. It is not only a counsel of despair in the particular instance, but a precedent which will exert, in the long run, anything but a happy effect on the entire Christian position.

These "Psalms" were written many centuries ago, and have been regarded by Jews and Christians alike as the inspired utterances of David ever since. The Convocation of Canterbury, however, have decided that Psalm 58 should not be printed in the Book of Common Prayer "as appointed to be read" in churches. This drastic step was decreed by forty-three votes to thirteen, and the Christian ecclesiastics summarily dismissed "King David" as though he were somebody mentioned in the *Newgate Calendar*. Now, what is precisely wrong with this taboored 58th Psalm? It is a comparatively short one, but Convocation says it is "un-Christian-like in character," which is a very polite and evasive way of expressing that it is utterly out of harmony with modern twentieth-century humanistic ideas. This is how this divinely inspired Psalm 58 runs:—

The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance; he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked. So that a man shall say, verily there is a reward for the righteous; verily he is a god that judgeth in the earth.

It will be noticed that the ecclesiastics have by no means selected the worst utterances in their barbarous Oriental Bible. Other psalms are open to very similar objections, as, for instance, the inspired cursings in Psalm 109:—

When he shall be judged, let him be condemned, and let his prayer become sin. Let his days be few, and let another take his office. Let his children be

fatherless, and his wife a widow. Let his children be continually vagabonds, and beg, let them seek their bread also out of their desolate places.

Another example of divine wisdom occurs in Psalm 137:—

Happy shall he be, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones.

Observe that it is the ecclesiastics themselves who have started to pull their own Bible to pieces, and they have begun with the "Psalms" of "David." Thus "King David" comes in for tardy, but none the less deserved, rebuke. For David is now seen as a sheer barbarian, and the champions of the Christian Bible are obliged to throw the old Oriental savage overboard in order to absolve their deity from the crimes and vices of his favourite. Let there be no mistake whatever on this point. The remarks of that accomplished Oriental scholar, Ernest Renan, are so apt that they deserve to be quoted:—

We shall see the brigand of Adullam and Ziklag assume gradually the airs of a saint. He will be the author of the Psalms; the sacred choræus, the type of the future saviour. Jesus must be the son of David! The evangelical biography will be falsified in a multitude of points by the idea that the life of the Messiah should reproduce the traits of David's. Pious souls, while enjoying the sentiments full of resignation and tender melancholy of the finest liturgical books, will fancy themselves in communion with this bandit. Humanity will believe in a final justice on the testimony of David, who never thought of it, and of the Sybil who never existed. O divine comedy!

It is only a question of time before the bishops will have to consider more than the mutilation of the Psalms. There remains the question of the barbarous ethics both of the Old and the New Testaments in relation to modern thought. For the Christian Bible is actually forced into the hands of children, and parents will not for ever consent to have their little one's intellects clouded and their characters degraded by uncivilized teaching of the Ages of Darkness.

It would be a thankless task to enumerate the false, foolish and wicked features of the Christian Bible, but the alleged sacred volume is packed with barbarism from cover to cover, from title to colophon. From the first mistake in "Genesis" to the final absurdity in "Revelation," few books are so full of errors. Much of the writing is sheer hysteria, even pathological, although presented in exotic forms of verse. In far too many places in the Old Testament the writing is filled with the turmoil of battle, the champing of horses, the flashing and bickering of swords and spears. Only on rare occasions does the still, sad voice of humanity make itself heard. As for the vastly overrated New Testament, the highly evolved moral perceptions of to-day are shocked beyond expression at the truly awful doctrine that countless millions of mankind will suffer eternal punishment. Indeed, a close study of this particular Bible should prove conclusively that it is not theology which purifies humanity, but humanity itself which civilizes theology.

This priestly decision to excise a portion of what has hitherto been considered as God's word is not a paltry matter. For this Christian Bible is not an ordinary book. It is stamped as God's word by Act of Parliament, it is forced (including Psalm 58 and other unseemly passages) into the hands of children at schools; it is used as a fetish for swearing upon in Courts of Law and Houses of Legislation. Men and women have been robbed of their children in its name, and excluded from public positions. And

people are still liable, at law, to penalties for criticizing it too closely.

Yet it is quite plain that Freethought is slowly forcing the Established Church into a dangerous position, and the clergy of all denominations are getting anxious. They are all seeking safety in flight, and are throwing things away in their hurry. At present, it is true, the process is confined to the older parts of their Bible, but, before long, the process will have to be extended to the New Testament. When the process is completed, the Christian Bible will be a thing of shreds and patches. It will cease to be a sacred fetish-book, and will have to take its place among the other alleged sacred books of the East, and the clergy will have to look for honest employment. When Freethought began to act in urgent and direct opposition to the aims of Priestcraft, the Christian Superstition received its notice to quit. The clergy themselves know this quite well, and this fact explains their use of such poisonous weapons against the emancipators.

MIMNERMUS.

Two Pioneer Books

Essays in Freethinking by Chapman Cohen, 2s. 6d.
Henry Hetherington (1792-1840) by Ambrose G. Barker, 6d. The Pioneer Press.

To praise Mr. Cohen in the *Freethinker* is supererogatory—to use a big word which has stuck in my head since I edited that noble Elizabethan defence of water-closets *The Metamorphosis of Ajax*, by Sir John Harington; for it was a word to which Harington was partial. There is no need here to go into the contents in detail of Mr. Cohen's latest book of essays. It is enough to say that the Freethinker will be pleased to find many of his own thoughts put in apter ways than he could have put them himself, and that the uninitiated will get many wholesome jolts; and that both will end the book wiser, but I am sure not sadder. For the business of destroying the lie, and bringing the light to bear on dark places is a joyous job. Surely that is something which needs saying and re-saying. One has only to think of the technique of kindly and contemptuous sympathy which the religious, when frightened out of direct abuse, have adopted towards the "poor unbeliever." It is an attitude which still largely persists. The "infidel" is supposed to have lost something, to be a poor creature deprived of essential comforts and insights which have been vouchsafed to the religious.

And what could be less true? There are sad fellows in all parties, admitted. But they are least of all likely to be found where the joy of struggle for a worthy goal is being experienced. Mr. Cohen belongs to the true breed. Apart from the fact that he has, when required, a fine vein of irony at his disposal there is a gusto of intellectual enjoyment in all he writes. Like all of us, he writes better some days than others; but one can certainly claim that he keeps up a remarkably unflagging interest in all the questions of Freethought. Because he has that inner passion, he can do the work of exposition so well. All his best work has that intellectual urge and cohesion which draws even the reluctant reader on.

One of the most incisive papers in the present collection, I think, is that in which he deals with "The Real Chesterton." He deftly shows the essentially childish basis of all Chesterton's supposedly scintillating wit, the glitter of which was in fact excruciatingly pinchbeck. My only complaint is that I would have liked more of Mr. Cohen in his exuberant moments. He has considerable powers as a literary

artist. For instance, the satirical picture of the Bishop of London, which I have before praised. And something of the more directly social comment such as his excellent article a few weeks ago on the masked censorship which is so rapidly growing up. But these criticisms are only in the Oliver-Twist way of asking-for-more; and such criticisms are the best compliment one can pay a book.

The essay on Bernard Shaw has historical value. It has also psychological interest, both generally and with regard to Mr. Shaw. It shows how easy it is for people to fall into slipshod half-fantasy statements of the daydreaming self-aggrandisement type. The ease with which Mr. Shaw does this kind of thing shows the limitations of his brilliant but superficial mind. We all do it to a certain extent, and it is a good thing to watch out for it in oneself. When one trips up one's memory rearranging or transposing events, ever so slightly, of course, to bring out a point more emphatically, or so on, one can better understand how the minds of the darkly religious worked in the past creation of myths. The distorted ways in which the mind tries to create significance in the unsatisfactory world is a subject not yet fully analysed.

Someday, in a rational Britain, the full tale of the fighters for enlightenment will be told; and I am sure that the *Freethinker* will take an important place in that tale, carrying on as it does one of the main radical currents of criticism, an inheritor of the sturdy tradition of criticism created by men like Paine. Mr. Cohen's part as the heir and expander of the work of Bradlaugh and Foote is assured of an honoured place. In my opinion he has the best written style of any of our popular anti-christian propagandists since Paine.

But though we have to wait for some time for full honours in these matters, there is no excuse for failing to do what we can to keep alive the name of the men who played their part in the tradition. That is why Mr. Barker's booklet on Hetherington is to be welcomed so heartily. Think of the countless volumes of biography poured out about minor characters of very little social or intellectual import, and then think of the neglect of Hetherington. Could one ask for a better example of the class-limitations of culture? The Baldwinians bellow about This Freedom while working night and day to undermine everything really vital in our heritage of liberty, and great men like Hetherington, who played a part of incomparable importance in creating that heritage, are totally ignored.

The more one studies the movements of the working and small-producer classes, from the days of Wilkes to the end of Chartism, the more respect, even astonishment, one feels for the glorious courage and intellectual achievement shown. The clarity of insight which these men had is simply staggering, when one compares it with the stodgy deadliness which settled over most of their successors. Bradlaugh was a great fighter, and with Tom Mann and John Burns, the old fighting spirit of the unions began its revival; but the second half of the century is a dark desert of stagnation and complacency when compared with the earlier half. What is magnificent about these early fighters, such as Paine or Owen or Hetherington or many of the Chartist leaders is their many-sidedness, the fullness of their outlook. No wonder that their lives and works have been buried under all the possible darkness of oblivion which the ruling classes have been able to conjure up. Oblivion is the best weapon in reaction's hand. Abuse or belittlement is used only when, as with Paine, the man cannot be altogether shut out of the history-books.

One of the urgent tasks of our day is the rediscovery of the fight waged by the progressives from Wilkes to

Ernest Jones. For society is in many ways returning to the conditions of those years of early capitalist industrialism. Fascism is at root a return to the Combination Laws, and brings down all the gains for freedom of expression which were involved with the smashing of those laws. The brief period of steady capitalist expansion (1848-1914*) is ended, and we have to pick up the revolutionary threads where these early fighters left them, or go under. We have one great advantage. The growth of science during the period of expansion has made possible the advent of scientific Socialism and the consequent supersession of competitive society. But we cannot hope to surpass these early men for the clearness with which they saw the issues or the courage with which they faced the oppressive state. At the rate at which British Capitalism is advancing towards its own kind of Fascism, it may not be long before those of us who have had the honour of speaking up in defence of freedom will have the further honour of being chosen as the victims of the concentration-camp and the jackboot. Let us prepare our spirits!

I have left myself no space in which to go over the story of Hetherington. But there is no need to retell the story here. If you value the rights of free speech, if you care for the magnificent tradition of liberty in England—not in terms of Baldwinian rhetoric, but as a reality tissue in the very lives of English men and women—then you will spend your sixpence and read in Mr. Barker's clear words the exciting story of Hetherington's splendid fights. Mr. Barker, himself a veteran in the struggle for liberty, has done a good job of work in every sense in carefully gathering together the facts about Hetherington. Hetherington had a key-place in the struggle for a free press; and Mr. Barker tells in vivid style, with warm sympathy, the story of that great paper *The Poor Man's Guardian*, and all Hetherington's other clashes with the authorities in defence of free speech, working-class rights, and free criticism of religion. The Pioneer Press continues to live up to its name.

JACK LINDSAY.

Bargain Basement Christianity

THE Gospel, we are told, is without price. Salvation is free. We remember a poor but prolific Catholic family who stumbled heavily over this exercise of faith. Most of the priestly dogmas were accepted without difficulty, in fact they often hoped for more difficult bones of doctrine to try their teeth on. But a religion that didn't cost anything they had grave difficulty in accepting. They had a feeling (which they strove rather unsuccessfully to put behind them) that little Lucy's frocks might have been less shabby but for the calls made upon them by the Agents of God on earth. But the Agents of God, of course, could easily have explained to them that religion was free in one sense and costly in another. Revealed Religion is like that; it revels in esoteric meanings. The Elusive Pimpernel was a clumsy fellow compared with a skilled theologian. The trained ecclesiastic knows not only what to say but where and when to say it.

* League of Nations figures show that Capitalist saturation was reached in 1914. Since then productivity has continued a relative shrinkage. What saved Capitalism from the post-war upheavals (which detached a sixth of the world into Socialism and almost did the same with Central Europe) was the fact that one section, the U.S.A., still had areas undeveloped. From 1929 crisis has been general, and now there are no resources (such as the U.S.A. was 1914-1928) to cushion the impacts of disintegration.

There is a sense, however, in which the Gospel is admittedly cheap, and Freethinkers would be the last to gainsay it. And the *Islamic Review* for last month sees it plainly enough. This periodical calls attention to the various world problems that have arisen, and comments that "the Church's disgraceful cowardice and failure to face them have made it all the more repulsive to its already doubting flock." By way of illustration, it quotes the case of a minister of Shepherd's Bush Methodist Church, who attracted big congregations by "comic customs and catchy slogans.* One of this gentleman's boosting devices it quotes:—

Does your wife nag you? Do you shout at your wife? If so, you are suffering from soul salvation. Come here. We will put you right.

"We wonder," reflects the *Islamic Review* "if religion could be presented in any cheaper form." Now Christians, we know well enough, have always been connected with what is known as "good form," and we feel that they will be little disposed to be criticized on such a ground by a *Muhammadan*. Only real Christians, we are sure, know what is implied by good form or good taste. And at a venture we assert that any charge of "cheapness" from Muhammadans must be easy to dismiss. Naturally it will again be necessary to attach an esoteric significance to such a term. It is essential in discussions that both parties speak the same language. If disputants use terms with different significations then they are *not* using the same language. They are simply gratifying their egos. Yet extrication from theological mazes is accomplished by attaching, as the emergency arises, new meanings to old words. It is not consistent with honesty, but it is often quite good punning, and it is easily understandable when one realizes the grim struggle for existence that the Church is now undergoing. Clearly if such a method assists God's Church to keep alive that method ceases to be *cheap*.

Some enterprising disciple of the Rev. Angus Tura at Slintown brought him news of the goings-on at Shepherd's Bush. He recognized at once their spiritual significance. He called upon his congregations at the Brotherhood Meetings to assist him with their ideas. Soon huge placards appeared on the Slintown boardings. The advertising columns of the *Shrick* and *Sentinel* showed signs of increasing health. All the notices ran on familiar lines.

Safe up aloft goes Sunny Jim.
The Grace of God uplifteth him.

SHE REACHED HEAVEN
THE WEEK BEFORE SHE GOT THERE.

She was a wayward maid
She betted, petted, strayed,
And Hygiene disobeyed.

AND HOW

She read that Grace was cheaply bought,
So Angus Tura's Temple sought
Now, thanks to him, at twenty-seven,
Maria's singing hymns in Heaven.

Young Men
You want the Best Girls
Young Women
You want the Best Boys

WE HAVE THEM

Come to the Slintown Brotherhood Meetings
Every Sunday at 3 p.m.
(Free Chocolates)

* *Daily Sketch*, August 26, 1937.

I accept Salvation.
 (Fill in on the dotted line).....
 Leave this form in person any Sunday at 3 at the
 Slimtown Brotherhood Meetings.
 Filling in this form entitles the signatory to one free
 entry in the POOL OF SILOAM

The Chapel for Discerning Men
 Angus Tura's Tabernacle
 Be Up to Date.

My friends fell off mysteriously one by one, and I
 could not tell the reason. One day, at the office, a
 kind friend said to me

COME TO THE LORD
 (Via Angus Tura's Tabernacle)
 and have your sins washed away.

HAVE YOU ECZEMA?
 HAVE YOU RHEUMATISM?
 HAVE YOU LARYNGITIS?
 HAVE YOU BACKACHE?
 Go and see a Doctor.
 HAVE YOU SOUL DISORDERS?
 Come and see Angus Tura
 The Slimtown Brotherhood Meetings.
 Sundays at 3.

I was feeling completely bored last night. Then
 Fred blew in. "Put on your gladdest of rags," he
 said. You will know that this did not take me long.
 And where do you think the dear boy took me?
 You'll never guess. He took me to Angus Tura's
 Tabernacle, the place that everyone is taking about.
 Oh, my dear, it was a wow. Fred really is a darling.
 He does get such brain waves. I don't think I ever
 laughed so much before. And the film! It was in-
 describable. Too, too utter. You must get
 George. . . .

[Ladies and Gentlemen, My critics say I am
cheap; I say I am *alive*. And when I say that, ladies
 and gentlemen, I give my critical moribundities
 something to think about. (The Rev. Angus Tura,
The Slimtown Sentinel.)]

T. H. ELSTOR.

Iron Crosses Over Guernica

Who said Christ taught
 the brotherhood of man?
 The Bishops of Franco
 now tell us
 that's bunk—
 he really meant
 the murder-hunt of man
 with Bishops blessing
 bombing planes and guns
 And the Holy Ghost descends
 in the flames of Franco's fire,
 blessing little children
 with its all-embracing breath,
 lifting little mothers
 whose bodies are so tired
 to the bishops long-preached heaven
 annihilating death.
 And the wooden-cross of the worker
 now, as of old,
 becomes in the hands of exploiters
 a cross of crucifying gold:
 a double-cross,
 a crooked cross,
 a cross steel cold,
 a cross of cruel metal
 that hurls across the heavens,
 raining holy manna
 of bishop-blessed bombs.

Blessed that they may speed
 more surely to their haven
 in the limbs of God's own children
 in the hearts of Christian homes.
 And while man is crucified
 on shrapnel, bombs and gas,
 the Bishops in the base
 use tanks as holy altars
 and celebrate
 with murderers
 the most high mass:
 to demonstrate once more
 the true church never falters
 the dead church never alters
 its ruling class!
 Let this
 be their very last supper,
 the last betrayal of all!
 For they've eaten the bread
 of our bodies,
 drunk
 the wine of
 of our blood
 too long
 oh lords
 too long!
 Let us end
 all cannibal carnivals,
 no more
 be victims of hypocritic beasts
 who live on human strife,
 no more
 be drugged
 by the opium past
 or deceived by dead-men's masks—
 for we are the flesh and blood of life!
 We are the living mass!

BERT MARSHALL.

Acid Drops

These are days of discoveries. The Vicar's warden at
 the Annual Parochial Meeting of St. Mary's, Leaming-
 ton, has discovered why it is that people do not go to
 Church. It is because Christianity "is too difficult and
 too uncompromising" to suit people. Now we like to
 be just, even to our enemies, and we repudiate this at-
 tack on Christianity, and by a vicar's warden. Con-
 sidering that in the name of Christianity people have
 embraced every kind of political idea from Communism
 to Conservatism, and every theory from free-love to the
 impossibility of "the saved" committing any kind of
 sin; seeing that it backs up absolute pacifism, on the
 one hand, and blesses guns on the other, that it has up-
 held polygamy and monogamy, it is a libel on the
 adaptability of Christianity to say that men will not
 have it because it is too difficult for them to practise.
 There is nothing on the face of the earth with which
 Christianity cannot be reconciled. The vicar's warden
 has done Christianity an injustice. He should be sacked.

Discovery number two is made by the Rev. J. Black,
 of Edinburgh. He says that the reason why "dictators
 want to down religion" is because the Church stands for
 liberty of conscience. But all dictators do not want to
 down religion. In Germany, it is true Hitler wants to
 down the Christian Church, but there are other pebbles
 on the beach, and he wishes to substitute another re-
 ligion. Religion is too valuable a drug not to be used
 by those who can do so. And, in Italy, Mussolini, far
 from wishing to destroy even Christianity, has bought
 the head of the largest Christian Church in the world.
 He and the Pope are working hand in hand, and the
 Pope finds no evil in the man who can lie like blazes, ill-
 treat women in order to induce their men-folk to come
 back and be executed, engage in brigandage in Abyssinia,
 and stir up revolution in Spain. Christianity
 seems to get on very well with dictatorships.

Meanwhile, for the benefit of Mr. Black, we present him with the following example from a brother parson—belonging to an opposition Church—the Roman Catholic Archbishop of St. Andrews and Edinburgh, has written the following letter to the Prime Minister:—

The decision of His Majesty's Government to permit an Anti-God Congress in London would, states the Archbishop, certainly cause widespread consternation. When the full significance of this project was appreciated, it would undoubtedly cause acute pain to an immense multitude of the inhabitants of this realm. A wave of righteous indignation could be expected as a natural result. It must surely come as a shock to all thinking men that the public oath solemnly sworn to God by His Majesty the King on the day of his Coronation, could mean so little, and that the similar obligations undertaken by the Ministers of the Crown could be so lightly set aside. The avowed aim of the proposed Congress was to root out and destroy all faith in the Creator, pretending He does not exist. With studied insult and unspeakable blasphemy the Congress would endeavour to annihilate every particle of belief in Him, to whose existence the very violence of its opposition bore unwilling but convincing testimony.

A meeting of all the head priests of the Archdiocese of St. Andrews and Edinburgh has, the Archbishop states, passed the following resolution: "This meeting unanimously expresses its horror that His Majesty's Government has decided to take no action with reference to an Anti-God Congress in the capital of the Empire. In face of the insult proposed to be offered to Almighty God—in whose holy name His Majesty the King has accepted the sovereignty of this realm, and as a sworn servant of God, has committed to your hands the destinies of this nation—we here assembled deem it our bounden duty to protest against this outrage to Christian feeling. We therefore unanimously resolve to call upon you, sir, as Prime Minister, to reconsider the whole matter, and to give assurances that such a congress will not be permitted either in London or elsewhere in his Majesty's realm."

So much for this gentleman's view of liberty of conscience. We should much like to have Mr. Black's opinion on the matter. Or perhaps he believes in liberty of conscience so long as he agrees with the conscience that asks for freedom.

A correspondence has been going on in the *Glasgow Herald* in answer to the Rev. Dr. James Black's recent sermon on Anti-Semitism. Dr. Black's fatuous contribution to the subject was a typical piece of Christian charity: he said, "Either fight the Jews or convert them." One correspondent rightly characterizes Dr. Black's alternatives as "to put it mildly, DISGRACEFUL." Another letter-writer says that all we have any right to do is "tolerate them and help them to remain Jews." We hope this correspondence may teach Christian fanaticism that nothing is quite so despicable as a toleration which makes conditions. The best thing that could happen to the Jews would be to treat them with absolute equality. If this were done they would become as are the Quakers—a vanishing (religious) body. Christian persecution has kept Judaism alive.

The Pope is up to date sufficiently to possess expensive electrical plant and the best of transmitters for wireless broadcasting. But though there is an Index of Forbidden Books there is no way of preventing Catholics from "listening-in" to the most heretical of messages. Of course the Papacy is completely protected in the British Isles, where the Government monopoly performs the work of Censor to the satisfaction of the Vatican. But in the U.S.A., the U.S.S.R. and a few other countries even Atheism can be heard. The Papacy will surely eventually discover some means of stopping the ears of its dupes to heresies on the radio.

Dr. Major, the well-known Modernist leader, has, in answer to a question, stated that he believes Jesus Christ was "conceived by the operation of ordinary human generation," and that Joseph was his father. We have always had a suspicion that if Jesus ever existed this was probably the true story. But we should not be sur-

prised to learn that Dr. Major still believes that in some special sense Jesus Christ was the Son of God, otherwise there seems no warranty for Doctor Major calling himself a Christian. We hate cant phrases, and even phrases that look like cant, but we are again bound to say that in religion, as in politics, what is required is a little more of a genuine honesty of speech in which people do a little more homage to truth than merely acknowledge its existence. If Jesus was not the "Son of God" in the historically theological sense, then the whole fabric of Christianity goes. That is the solid truth of the matter. The really distressing thing to-day is that in both politics and religion no one even expects leaders to speak the truth. So long as they observe certain conventions everyone appears to be satisfied.

The Bishop of Gloucester says that it is impossible to keep up a "high" standard of religious "instruction" unless the Church is definitely associated with elementary education. Readers will note the words which we have placed within quotation marks. By "high" the Bishop obviously means "desirable." "Instruction" is, we fancy, an accidental use of the right word. For that is all religion is. It is not education, any more than teaching a parrot to repeat words is education. It is "instruction" simply. Like soldiers on parade or a parrot in a cage, there must be an unreasoning response to certain catchwords and phrases. The performance of a set ceremonial by a bishop, and the set responses given by a congregation, is to-day something that one can picture a number of bright members of the parrot world doing quite effectively.

There are, however, two things worth saying again about this maintenance of religious "instruction" in schools which should exist for education only. The first is that the Church knows that it dare not leave religious instruction to a time when those to whom it is offered will realize what they are being told. *The Church is wholly dependent upon the perpetuation of a childish mentality.* The second consideration is that all Governments—whatever be their particular colour—love a mentality which takes loyalty and patriotism to mean un-critical and unquestioning obedience to those in power. And to secure this there is no better aid than a Church.

In a recent broadcast speech Mr. Ellis Roberts offered a strong plea for the reading of theological works. We admit there are many strong points in favour of this advice. It would give jaded and intelligent fiction readers a new line for their favourite pastime. And those who wished to make a collection of theological works could satisfy themselves at the cost of a very small outlay. Thousands of them can be bought for two or three pence per copy, and there are plenty of second-hand booksellers who would cheerfully throw in a dozen or so volumes for nothing to anyone who spent two or three shillings with him in the purchase of other books.

Bishop McGrath expresses the not very original opinion that Christianity has not failed because it has never been tried. But what is that but failure on the most gigantic and most complete level? Consider. According to the Christian legend, God Almighty himself went to the trouble of getting born on earth in human form in order to save the world. He established his Church, endowed it with his guidance and presence, worked miracles time after time to demonstrate his power, and in the case of one nation at least—our own—verified the words of Jesus Christ, "Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth." But in spite of this Christianity has never yet been tried! What is this but failure? The world is as though Christianity had never been. What would be said of a commercial traveller who was sent out by his firm, and who, during a dozen years of travelling, never landed a single order? Would it be any use his saying I am not a failure as a traveller, it is simply that people will not buy my goods? The Church is not only in the position of that traveller, but it is actually asking for a rise in salary—in the shape of increased donations.

One of the writers in the *Church Times* asks "is the Devil a Joke?" The answer, we take it is "To the intelligent portion of the laity, yes. To the clergy, no. It is a very serious matter indeed for them." Christians have desired God mainly for the reason that a man may desire a mustard plaster—to avoid something still more disagreeable.

The Hampshire County Council has decided to allow cinemas to open on Good Friday. The resolution was backed by—among others—a Labour member and a Roman Catholic. We are not surprised at the latter giving support. Our sabbatarian laws, than which nothing did more to demoralize the working-classes, are wholly Protestant in origin. Both these supporters argued that if decent entertainment was not provided young people would do nothing but loaf about the streets. That is quite true, and police reports from all over the country testify to the improvement of behaviour in the streets where cinemas are opened on Sundays. But Sir Thomas Inskip—whose present business is to see that the teaching of Christ to turn one cheek when the other is smitten is observed by increasing the rate at which bombing-planes and munitions in general is turned out—is President of the Lord's Day Observance Society, and believes that one cause of Britain's trouble is the lack of Sunday Observance.

It is quite refreshing to come across a specimen of what might be termed the higher journalism in one of the picture "dailies." Concerning the reported murder of a Methodist missionary named Goldsworthy in China, the *Daily Mirror* pertinently questions why Christianity should attempt the "conversion" of the Chinese. In China, says the writer, "you have no heathens, but an ancient people following the ancient laws of the Buddha, that morning star of peace and goodwill towards men. To them still the Great Teacher, the guide to the Nirvana. And not only to them. . . ." Here the writer makes his own hiatus, and aptly too. But we have to part company with him when he suggests that we could do with the "services of those earnest men, the missionaries," here at home. We could wish them ALL abroad but for our human and humane regard for every race and people.

Funny fellows those "national press" journalists! The *Daily Express* make a prominent display on its leader page of its reasons for scorning to print "social gossip." Some eminently sane reasons, too. Yet a preceding page "features" the family of the new American ambassador, Joseph P. Kennedy, with particular regard to an 18-year old daughter having *fallen in love!* "It's so silly"; "He's awful nice"; "I like him a lot"; are several of the young lady's remarks recorded by a staff reporter!

Could a homily condemning "money-making" proceed from a more inappropriate source than a cleric—and a prelate at that? The Archbishop of York gave "advice" to Leeds University students, the other day, which must have tickled City financiers and "scrip" dealers generally to the very midriff. For these people well know the proclivities of the clergy towards "mere money-making."

Mere money-making ought not to be the aim, said the Archbishop. Those who have made a great deal of money find it annoying, but do not stop, I notice.

To choose a career from the point of view of the amount of leisure one could get, or for the purpose of securing an adequate income, or because of the amusement to be obtained, was wrong. Those were all purely selfish motives, and for a young man, or woman, to choose a career from selfish motives was a sin.

A poser is asked by a correspondent of the *Christian World*. He raises the question: "From a scientific standpoint, can you explain Joshua x. 12-15 and 2 Kings xx. 9-12." As these and other texts actually and defi-

nitely state that the sun "stood still," or that the shadow on the sun-dial was brought "ten steps backward" by direct intervention of God, we might have expected an expression of honest if ignorant belief. Or we might have had an equally honest repudiation of these amusing legends. The editor suggests that although the stories are not "scientific," they are "poetical." But he objects to our calling them "merely poetical." Besides, the reason for it is given. It was to give the Jews enough daylight to kill their enemies. This story is either a miracle or nothing. And miracles do not happen.

The *Catholic Leader*, of Brisbane, has a "Young Peoples' page conducted by 'Celine.'" Children write to this lady and their letters are published. From the issue of December 2, we take this extract from one such letter:—

Dear Celine,—Since I wrote to you last, Celine, I have won £100 in the Casket. I also drew a horse in the last Melbourne Cup, and received £2 10s. I'm sending sixpence for the Holy Childhood. Your fond member.

This member pays on results and pays handsomely! When God sends him £102 10s., he assumes that God means him to have it. The Sixpenny donation can be taken as a pure act of Grace, reflecting the existence of a grateful and pious heart.

Fifty Years Ago

Six years and a-half ago a duly elected member of Parliament was refused his seat at St. Stephen's. When he applied for it he was mocked and reviled, and when he tried to take it he was brutally assaulted by messengers and policemen, fourteen of whom ejected him from the premises like Saturday-night "chuckers-out" at a public-house. Those who saw this gentleman standing on the pavement in Palace Yard, with clothes dishevelled, pale and panting, fixing his eyes grimly on the door through which fourteen hirelings had fought him into the open air, will never forget the scene. It was shameful and disgusting. But it was not surprising. The Tory party, although aided by a bigoted squadron of professed Liberals, were chiefly responsible for the infamy; and everybody with any knowledge of history knows that the Tory party, with all its pretence about law and order, is always ready to use violence, when it is safe to do so, against the champions of popular rights.

Years have rolled by, parliaments have come and gone, since that eventful day; and that expelled member now sits in the House of Commons unmolested, although his fitness or unfitness to sit is precisely the same as it was then. That has not changed, but the times have changed.

But the "chucked out" member does something more than sit in the House of Commons. He speaks, works, and is universally respected there. Nay, more, he has just carried the second reading of an important Bill by a thumping majority of a hundred in a full House. And what is that Bill? Its object is to abolish the compulsory Oath altogether, not only in Parliament but everywhere else. Six years ago the House of Commons would not let Mr. Bradlaugh swear or affirm, nor would it alter the law, although Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Bright, and other leaders of the Liberal party pleaded eloquently for common sense and common justice. But now the House of Commons lets Mr. Bradlaugh sit after swearing, without so much as a bray of dissent from a single Tory jackass; and—more remarkable still—what it would not do for the leading Liberal statesmen, it has actually done for the despised and rejected Atheist. By a big majority of a hundred (nearly two to one) it has carried the second reading of Mr. Bradlaugh's Bill, which permits affirmation instead of swearing wherever oath is at present required by law.

Seldom has the whirligig of time brought about a more signal revenge.

The Freethinker, March 25, 1888.

THE FREETHINKER

FOUNDED BY G. W. FOOTE

61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4

Telephone No.: CENTRAL 2412.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"NEW READER."—The article in *Answers* is an example of the worst kind of lying—that of telling half-truths. It is true, for example, that Joseph Lancaster, Nonconformist, led the way in opening schools for children—apart from those controlled by the Church. It is also true that the first £1,000 given to him came from Robert Owen, the man who said that all religions were forms of geographical insanity. The impulse to the promotion of schools on the part of the Nonconformists, was not educational at all—it was to secure the children against the Church of England. The better impulse came from the influence of the French Revolution.

C. W. STYRING (Leeds).—It is amusing to learn that you, who have been a regular reader of the *Freethinker* from its first number, and "hope to remain a reader to the end of my days," have been receiving "specimen copies." Such accidents will happen, but efforts of that kind admirable though they are, will at times make a slip. We are proud to have retained so long your loyalty and respect, and hope to continue to do so.

H. A. GILL.—Thanks for good wishes. We are glad you find the paper "stimulating." That is what it is intended to be. We are taking every possible care, and hope to be all right again very soon. But the times are trying, and one must keep on the alert.

C. P. BUDGE.—We do not know the publisher of *The Secret of Freemasonry Revealed*, by J. Leatham. It has never come our way. Perhaps some of our readers may be better informed.

A. THOMAS.—There is just enough superficial truth in your friend's contention to mask timidity with a cloak of consideration for others. The fact remains that until the right of very man to publicly express his opinion on every subject, and with regard to every situation, is admitted in practice, to claim that even tolerably complete freedom exists is a lie. If a man will say that he lacks the courage to let the public see what his opinions are, or if he will say that his position or connexions prevent his doing so, one may regret the situation, but still respect the man. But when a man tries to convert his apparent support of things in which he does not believe, timidity or self-interest is the only explanation. One's first duty is not to one's orthodox acquaintances but to one's own self-respect.

H. MARKLEY, E. HENDERSON AND R. CHAMBERS.—Papers are being sent to addresses given. Thanks.

PRESTON BRANCH N.S.S.—Your lecture notice was received too late for insertion. These notices must reach us—on postcards preferably—not later than first post on Tuesday morning.

FOR Advertising and Circulating the *Freethinker*.—T. Simmons, 5s.

G. E. HEAD.—As there are numbers of Christian Churches open in Russia, the story that the Bible is banned or burned in Russia is an obvious falsehood. As to the story that Ingersoll ever prevented a reply being written to *Notes on Ingersoll*, it is ridiculous. He had no power to prevent any such thing, articles were written about it and around it. Ingersoll himself considered it unworthy of reply, and we agree with him. We have declined to notice scores of attacks on ourselves. A criticism should be worthy of reply in order to receive one.

C. BARTON.—We meant exactly what we said. You are forgetting that when the German Government stated its willingness to enter into "conversations" with our Government it was accompanied by the condition that the British press should be prevented from commenting on the proceedings. Instead of this being treated as a piece of unwarranted impudence, Mr. Chamberlain, while saying that he was unable to fall in with the suggestion, hoped that the press would observe due reserve in its comments. In return for this, when our Government ventured on a mild protest against German brigandage in Austria, it was sharply reminded by a deliberate snub, that it was no business of ours, and the protest was not accepted.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sugar Plums

Mr. Cohen will lecture to-day in the Picture House, Market Street, Manchester, on "Must We Have a Religion?" Chair will be taken at 7 p.m. Admission will be free, but there will be reserved seats at 6d. and 1s.

On Monday evening (March 28) Mr. Cohen will speak in the Public Lecture Hall, Northgate, Blackburn, on the same subject. Chair will be taken at 7.45. Admission will be free with reserved seats sixpence.

We regret that, owing to a mistake, we did not receive in time for acknowledgment in last week's paper a telegram that was sent from the Glasgow Branch Dinner to Mr. Cohen, containing the good wishes of those present. We quite appreciate the good-feeling that inspired the message, and can assure those responsible that we are really recovering, and shall be in good fighting form for the Manchester meeting on March 27. We also wish to specially express our regret at breaking the Glasgow engagement to those friends who came from Edinburgh, Perth, Greenock, Dundee, and other places. We can only plead that only twice in nearly fifty years have we broken an engagement on account of illness. We will try and avoid adding to the offence.

We take this opportunity of reminding all members and Branches of the N.S.S. that resolutions for the Agenda of the Annual Conference should be sent in without delay. Individual members have the same right as Branches to send resolutions. The Conference, this year, will be held at Glasgow, and there are some special features therewith that will make the gathering more than usually attractive. There will be a Civic Reception by the Lord Provost and members of the Corporation on the Monday, when a concert and refreshments will be provided. There will also be a motor-coach excursion round Loch Lomond and district. But those who wish to attend the Reception must send in their names soon, as the cards of invitation cannot be issued by the Lord Provost until the list is in his hands. Lastly there is the Glasgow Exhibition, which promises to be one of the most impressive held in this country. And we may add another "lastly"—for those who can take Whit-week for their holiday, there is no better time than June in which to see the Scotch Highlands. The weather is usually good, the darkness comes much later than it does in our part of the world, and the hotel prices are at their lowest.

We have received a letter from R. B. Kerr, in which he informs us, apropos of our "Acid Drops" of March 20, that the League of Nations can never be reconstituted on its old basis. But a *reconstituted League* (our phrase) means a new basis, unless we are playing with words.

And as we took up the position—directly the League was formed—that on the existing basis, made up of the old governing gangs, not one of them could be trusted not to steal a march on the other, and as this was said when we stood alone on the matter, and have repeated it scores of times since, Mr. Kerr's admonition seems a little behind time.

Will those readers who would be prepared : 1. To translate from and into French, German, Dutch, Spanish, Czech or Russian. 2. To act as interpreters at the International Congress from September 9 to 13 next, or on any of those days (in French, German, Dutch, Czech, Spanish or Russian). 3. To act as stewards at all or any of the sessions of the Congress, communicate with the Organizing Committee, International Freethought Congress, 4, 5 & 6 Johnson's Court, Fleet Street, E.C.4.

A very good notice of Lord Snell appeared in a recent issue of the *News-Chronicle*, in which many nice things were said of the subject of the sketch, and all of them deserved. His life has been one of hard work, and his character that of a man with high ideals and simple tastes. If the country was less saturated with snobbery than it is, it would marvel as it does—though not so much as it did—when a person belonging to the "lower" classes advances to a deserved place among the "higher." We have known Harry Snell for some forty-five years, and can say with truth that whatever success he has achieved he has well-earned. He had a genuine feeling for the "under-dog," and an equally genuine devotion to the cause of freedom of thought.

In the course of the sketch of Lord Snell the writer remarked that Snell came under the influence of Bradlaugh. We think that Snell would say that no greater influence than that exercised by Bradlaugh came into his life. But what we note in the article in question is that this is all it says. It would never have done for the *News-Chronicle* to say that it was not merely Bradlaugh the Reformer that influenced Snell, but Bradlaugh the avowed Atheist, and that for many years Snell worked within the ranks of the National Secular Society. Lord Snell has never hidden his association with the Freethought movement, and on more than one occasion has avowed it. But the *News-Chronicle* while among the best of the morning papers—it has still remnants of the better traditions of decency, that such papers as the *Daily Express* and the *Daily Mail* seem never to have acquired—yet retains a degree of humbug and implied untruthfulness where religious interests are concerned. Hence the "came under the influence of Bradlaugh," which to the unwary reader may mean no more than Bradlaugh the politician. Had Snell been a member of the Methodist or some other Church, the fact would not have been omitted.

A little while back we said we should be interested to learn how many of our subscribers could date back fifty years of regular reading of the *Freethinker*. We have received a number of letters, but we should be pleased to hear from as many as possible. We think they would provide interesting matter for comment when they are collected together.

The Secular Society, Limited is issuing a new edition of *Will Christ Save Us?* by G. W. Foote. This is one of the most famous of our late editor's pamphlets, and is peculiarly suitable to the present time. The pamphlet will be published at twopence.

We think that most of our readers can afford a shilling. If we are right we strongly advise them to expend that amount on two of the new Penguin six-pennys. They are *Mussolini's Roman Empire*, by G. T. Garrett, and *Blackmail or War*, by Genevieve Tabouis, an authority on European diplomatic manoeuvring. The first deals with the Italian plot for the conquest of Abyssinia and the invasion of Spain by Germany and Italy. "Plot" is, perhaps, not quite the right word, since the various steps appear to have been well-known in high places in this country and elsewhere, although it was carefully kept quiet in the larger

part of the press, and camouflaged by doctored news from the B.B.C. The second book shows the influence of the Italian and German policy of demanding blackmail under a veiled threat of war, and the success with which this policy has met. These two books, we must add, are not written by members of the "Left," by avowed Communists—so far as we know—and appear to have no axe to grind, save that of opening the eyes of the people as to what is going on. At any rate, they are books that all interested should read. And they are not issued by a propagandist society, but by an ordinary business firm.

We are indebted to the New Zealand *Truth Seeker* for a portion of an address by Mr. F. G. Birke to members of the Rotary International :—

One must have a firm grip of one's religion to visit Jerusalem, for there is no place on earth so irreligious as the so-called Holy City. This would have a tendency to make one critical of religion generally, and it so affected me.

Jerusalem is a meeting-place of many faiths, each one exhibiting a degree of intolerance towards others that seems scarcely possible in this day and age.

When a uniformed soldier has to stand guard in a Christian Church to keep groups of Christians from killing each other, one wonders what has become of a certain exclamation made in these same hills—"Peace on earth, Goodwill towards men."

In the sacred edifice of the church of the Holy Sepulchre some years ago, one of the Christian bodies conducted a ceremony, and when it was over, left a table in the aisle. Another group of different denomination, then prepared to parade through the aisle. They found the table in the way and refused to touch it, demanding that the ones who left it should remove it. Some two hundred people were killed in the Holy Sepulchre that day trying to settle the question of who was to remove the table.

On another occasion four people were killed in the church during a religious quarrel.

No place in the world exhibits equal bitterness. People of all denominations and all churches come to Jerusalem to obtain religious inspiration, but inspiration in intolerance would seem to me the only inspiration that would be attained by contact with the Holy City.

The Way of the World

WHEN Mussolini bought the Papacy for a cash sum of about £19,000,000, he made a good bargain since it brought him the support of Roman Catholics outside Italy. There are not a great number of Fascists in this country, but Mr. William Teeling, in his *The Pope in Politics* (1937), says that half of them are Roman Catholics. We also understand that quite a fair proportion of these are in government offices, some holding rather important positions. Mr. Teeling, who writes as a Roman Catholic, says that from the money paid him by Mussolini, the Pope is now in a position to carry on in Rome without receiving a penny from the outside world. In paying over the money Mussolini insisted that a certain proportion of the purchase price—which has gone up considerably since the famous thirty pieces of silver transaction recorded in the New Testament—should be invested in Italian Government stock for a certain number of years. The Pope, says Mr. Teeling, therefore became interested in the well-being of the Italian State to the extent of his investment. That was "a guarantee of good behaviour." It also helps to induce Catholics out of Italy to support whatever the Pope decides upon doing in Italy. Up to the present whenever Mussolini has decided upon anything the Papacy has seen no reason for disagreement.

The *Church Times* remarks that "the Christian is compelled to recognize that this week (ending March 18) has increased the possibility of war." Now why "the Christian"? Does the *Church Times* believe that Christians are such nit-wits that what is obvious to all others has at last been seen by Christians? We have a better opinion of Christians than that, and believe that when a Christian runs his nose against a brick wall he realizes, after due reflection, that he has hit something hard. How would the passage if instead of "Christian" we substituted "red-headed men," or "men wearing plus-fours"? Does the *Church Times* believe that it takes a Christian longer to see the obvious than it does the ordinary man, or that whatever the *Church Times* agrees with is Christian?

At this time of strain we should all be pleased to have at the head of affairs a man as alert as Mr. Neville Chamberlain. Secret as Germany and Italy have kept their intentions with regard to Spain, the Prime Minister has heard "rumours that Germany and Italy are at present supplying arms and men to General Franco." We take it that is the vigilance of our secret intelligence service that has supplied the Prime Minister with reports of these rumours. But these rumours will not mislead him. They probably have their origin in Germany and Italy, who wish to mislead our Prime Minister. But he is not so easily caught.

Mr. Chamberlain is horrified and disgusted with the bombing of Barcelona. But we remind him that all he has to go upon is rumours. Neither Hitler nor Mussolini has sent him official information that they are providing the planes and the men to bring about the bombing. And "mere rumour" is not enough on which to act. The Pope has also written to Franco mildly protesting. But he has issued no reprimand to Mussolini, who is so largely responsible for the Franco rebellion. Mussolini made a very shrewd purchase when he bought the support of the Vatican for nineteen million pounds. One need only read the Roman Catholic press in this country (where it writes under a certain restraint), to realize how good this bargain was.

The joy with which Austria has received its liberator—Hitler—is shown by the number of suicides that have taken place. There is nothing new in the history of the world for the devotees of certain religious creeds sacrificing themselves for the glory of their God, and we expect that it is in a burst of sheer religious enthusiasm that these suicides have taken place. Even granting that some of these suicides were assisted in committing the happy despatch by the revolvers of the imported German storm troops, that only emphasizes the religious quality of the occurrences.

Those of our leading "statesmen" who are convinced that Hitler has the full affection of the German people are right. It was affection for the Germans in Austria that led to the annexation of that country, ostensibly to prevent a plebiscite of the Austrians on the question of independence. In place of the plebiscite, Hitler announced one to be taken under his auspices, the fairness of which was prepared for by imprisoning those who were inclined to cause trouble, and by the "suicide" of large numbers who kindly removed themselves so that there should be no opposition. But to make the vote of a free people decisive, Hitler has now decided that the whole of Germany's sixty-five millions shall join in the

Austrian plebiscite, which is to decide whether Austria shall be a part of Germany—that having been already decided. Nothing could be fairer, and although we expect a "rumour" to meet the ears of Mr. Chamberlain that here and there a cranky individual may remark that it would be a curious thing to take a vote among burglars as to whether burgling should be accounted an illegal profession, that is not likely to affect his policy.

All the same, we hope it may not happen that Hitler, having observed that there are in this country a very large number of people of German descent, that our Royal Family are clearly of German origin, and that there are many Germans domiciled in this country, decides to take a vote—as votes are taken in free Germany—whether Britain ought to become part of the German Reich. We doubt not that the vote would be quite unanimous.

Some Members of Parliament asked Mr. Chamberlain whether he would suggest to Hitler that some measure of decent treatment should be measured out to Christians, Jews, and Socialists in what was once Austria. We do not see how he could make any such request. There has been no official reports from the German Government that Christians, Jews and Socialists are being treated indecently. And until that is received from German headquarters all that Mr. Chamberlain has to go on are mere rumours. Quite clearly Hitler cannot be saddled with the responsibility for people losing their heads and committing suicide, or leaving the country in a hurry. It may be assumed that it is these people who have left Austria who are responsible for the rumours that have reached the Prime Minister's ears.

We learn from the London papers of March 21 that our Government has given Italy the assurance that our increase of armaments is not directed towards that country. We believe a similar assurance has been given to Germany. It is a pity that the Government has so exposed its hand. We may now disclose the fact that the rearmament policy is really directed against the Irish Free State and the Channel Islands. Guernsey, Jersey and Sark present a combination that is enough to alarm any Power. As a further proof of our good will to Italy the Government has undertaken to do all it can to prevent gun-running to Abyssinia, Lybia and elsewhere. That will enable Mussolini to release troops for the purpose of securing peace in Europe.

Lord Beaverbrook promises us that there shall be no war. But the condition is that we must go on manufacturing guns, and battleships, and battle-planes, and (implied) take in the *Daily Express*, just as though war will break out at once. That is real statesmanship, to prepare for something that will not happen, and to avoid doing anything that will make the preparations unnecessary.

QUONDAM.

Not one reader in a hundred cares anything about an act of intellectual bad faith: it is part of the custom of the country. We like fair-play in fisticuffs, and a form of it in fox-hunting; but in regard to intellectual antagonists, living or dead, the conception, broadly speaking, does not exist.—J. M. Robertson.

The Doctrine of Accommodation

IV.

"ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE . . ."

"If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth," Christ is said to have said. "With God, all things are possible." I agree with both statements, though not in their usual sense. If you can only believe in God such as he has been preached by Christianity, you can believe anything at all. With God in your mind, all things are possible, and there need be no limit to the miracles of mental accommodation that you can perform. This is shown time and again in the report of the Archbishops' Commission.

The report is one of the most damning indictments of religion that has ever been produced in defence of religion.

Consider the position. The Commission are a body of honest and sincere men, who in their different ways believe quite honestly in some kind of Christian faith; who have honestly discussed these matters among themselves; and who have produced what to them is not only an honest but a consistent (and even a bold) report.

No one suggests that the Commission sat down and said, or even thought, "Now let us see how much fraud and jiggery-pokery we can put across the patient British public." On the contrary, they went to a great deal of trouble to deal, according to their lights, faithfully with the patient B.P., and to present an honest and consistent report within the terms of their reference.

Why, then, should all this good intention and labour result in such a muddleheaded, inconsistent, self-contradictory, and dishonest report?

This result, however, is surely not surprising when we consider that the Commission were dealing with religion in general and Christianity in particular. Whatever basic errors and dangers may lie in religion as a whole, a religion of revelation such as Christianity can be relied upon to intensify.

In this instance, commission and report are an admirable illustration of the way religion warps the human mind. Mental honesty and revealed religion cannot live together in harmony. Not because the "desire to worship" or belief in God is in itself dishonest, or always without benefit; but because the attempt to reconcile belief in God and revelation with an interpretation of the world based purely on reason, is an attempt to harmonize opposites without changing their nature; and like all such attempts, is doomed from its conception.

It fails even where it seems to succeed. Indeed, where it appears to succeed most, there it fails most. The more primitive, uncritical, deeply ingrained belief in God refuses to be sacrificed; the weaker belief in reason must give way. God—or reason—must be left supreme.

This would not be so bad if the Christian recognized it; and in keeping his God, abandoned his pretence of reason. But he doesn't; he keeps the pretence of reason, and makes it subservient to the supernatural. That is the fatal mistake; for with his mind anchored to the unyielding and pseudo-authoritative belief in the supernatural ultimate, with his mind influenced and permeated by that belief at every turn, he is driven further and further into the realm of "re-interpretations" and "symbols," "spiritual truths" and "mental reservations."

Though there is a lot of conscious humbug in religion, this particular self-deception is mostly unconscious. The Christian naturally does not recognize

or acknowledge it as either self-deception or unconscious dishonesty; if he did, he would abandon the belief in God as a dogma, and leave his theories to emerge from his facts, instead of forcing facts to fit theories. The Christian tries to explain reason by God; the logical thing to do is to allow reason to explain the belief in God. That would never do for the Christian—or the Churches: when you have explained the belief in God, you have explained God. And to explain God is to explain him away.

The way leading Churchmen (as the members of the Commission and Dr. Inge) have a habit of referring to "educated Christians" of to-day, is not exactly complimentary to Anglican tradition. Not only does it seem to suggest that the uneducated are not really Christians at all—which is a contradiction in terms—but there is the added implication that the "educated Christian" is rather a strange new cove in Church circles.

Whether the Anglican Christians of 1562 were "educated Christians" of their day or not, I do not presume to judge, but it seems to me they were a darn sight more honest. Owing to the usual "curious and unhappy difference," which had "exercised the Church of Christ" (*semper eadem*), God in 1562 willed the Church by his Ordinance to set up as the "true doctrine of the Church of England, agreeable to God's Word," the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion, which were to be binding on all members in their "true, usual literal meaning," and from which "the least difference" was strictly prohibited on penalty of the Church's censure.

No man hereafter shall either print or preach, to draw the Article aside any way, but shall submit to it in the plain and full meaning thereof; and shall not put his own sense or comment to be the meaning of the Article, but shall take it in the literal and grammatical sense.

Now, this is honest enough, and we know where we are. The Church, by its Thirty-Nine Articles ordained by God and approved by itself, believes literally and fully, among other things, in the Virgin Birth (Article 2), Christ's perfect Godhead and perfect Manhood (2), Christ's physical resurrection and physical ascension (Article 4), the all-sufficiency of the Scriptures for salvation (6), the Nicene, Athanasius's, and the Apostles' Creeds (8), original sin inherent in man's nature, meriting in itself God's wrath and damnation (9), and that the Lord's Supper is true only in a spiritual sense (28).

Seeing that the Commission openly deny some of these literal doctrines of their Church, and on all the others allow generous divergences, what is their position? They could honestly do one of two things. They could admit that they were wrong in "drawing the Article aside," and putting their "own sense to be the meaning of the Article." Or they could say frankly that the Articles themselves are no longer to be subscribed to in that form, and that God was wrong in 1562 in inspiring the Church to make them binding in their literal sense. But the Commission does neither; it does not really retain the Articles, and it does not really reject them.

It agrees that "the position of the Church of England in relation to other Christian bodies in Western Christendom is still defined by the retention of those formularies"; nevertheless, although God, in 1562, said these formularies were meant literally and were not to be altered in any way:—

These formularies should not be held to prejudice questions which have arisen since their formulation or problems which have been modified by fresh knowledge or fresh conceptions.

Although the Articles were laid down as literal and eternal, and although

the purpose of credal statements is to affirm the truths on which the Gospel of the Church and the religious life of Christians is based,

yet,

It is not their purpose to affirm either historical facts or metaphysical truths merely as such. . . .

It is not therefore of necessity illegitimate to accept and affirm particular clauses of the Creeds while understanding them in this symbolic sense.

In face of such spiritual wisdom a mere unbeliever feels like the comedian who exclaims, "One of us is daft and I'm all right."

RONALD STANDFAST.

(To be concluded)

Correspondence

A CORRECTION

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER"

SIR,—My attention has been drawn to an article in your periodical headed "Pestilent Propaganda." In that article "Mimnermus" finds *Chambers' Encyclopædia*, "in an edition published a few years ago," to be full of bias directed against Freethinkers and Free-thought." I do not know what he calls "a few years," but in the edition published thirty years ago two of the four passages he objects to have already disappeared. By 1926—how much earlier I know not—another had gone. There remains one, the quotation from Leslie Stephen. That, I grant, should be cut out. I had not suspected the author of "An Agnostic's Apology" of being in the conspiracy.

If "Mimnermus" detects anything else of the kind, I hope he will write to me, and point it out before he assails *Chambers' Encyclopædia* in the *Freethinker*; and to save time and trouble, I hope he will use the latest edition. I have certainly no such bias as he complains of, nor, I am sure, had my predecessor.

I shall be glad if as an act of justice you find room for this protest.

WILLIAM GEDDIE,

Editor of "Chambers' Encyclopædia."

[We regret that any injustice should have been done Messrs. Chambers and Co. in the matter above referred to. It is very important where historical facts are concerned that writers should take care that their researches do not stop short at a certain date, or that no later research materially affects the statements they make. When the remarks made by a writer cover a particular period only, he should state the facts. A writer's first duty should be to act loyally and honestly to his readers.—EDITOR.]

RELIGION IN HOSPITALS

SIR,—On February 7, I entered the Whiston Infirmary (under the auspices of the Lancashire County Council) to undergo a major operation. In making my application for admission I distinctly stated, when questioned, that I had no religion, that I was an Atheist, and my admission order was accordingly marked: Religion—None.

On entering the portals of the Infirmary I was again interrogated by two reception clerks, male and female, in reference to the entry: No religion.

The female proclaimed that it was ridiculous to suggest that I hadn't any religion. The male frankly informed me that I could not be admitted without a religion. I pointed out the absurdity of their contentions and drew their attention to the oath of affirmation in the courts. Nevertheless, they were adamant. I could not go in without a religion. I retorted that I hadn't any, and ultimately was admitted.

Inside I found they had altered the entry on my admission card to C. of E.

A. JOHNSON.

[The above letter bears evidence to a monstrous state of things. We do not say that what was done was positively illegal, although we fancy that a case might be made out

for a court to consider. But we suggest to the writer of the letter that he should at once bring the matter before the Lancashire County Council, and if notice is not taken, the matter might be raised in other quarters. The officials of the hospital were guilty of gross impertinence and deliberate lying. But neither of these are gross offences where Christianity is concerned.—EDITOR.]

THE LESSONS OF HISTORY

SIR,—Mr. Jack Lindsay's letter leaves me in a dilemma: to answer it satisfactorily calls for another article; not to make some reply would be discourteous. May I, quite briefly, say that I did not call the Marxist materialist analysis "inadequate." What I wrote was that as a *sole* explanation of man's history I found it inadequate. And I underlined the word *sole*. I do not admit that material bases precede psychic ones, as Mr. Lindsay says they do. I agree that most often they precede *political* actions, but that is a much smaller field of activity. Man is a "mind-body" entity, and his activities emanate from both aspects of that unity, neither one before the other. And, in any case, will not Mr. Lindsay agree that it is not man's activities that matter, but what he *thinks* about them? *Imponderabilia* like these are not necessarily preceded by material bases.

BAYARD SIMMONS.

National Secular Society

REPORT OF EXECUTIVE MEETING HELD MARCH 17, 1938

The President, Mr. Chapman Cohen in the chair.

Also present: Messrs. Clifton, Hornibrook, Bryant, Preece, Elstob, Ebury, Silvester, Tuson, Bedborough, Mrs. Grant, Mrs. Quinton, Junr., and the Secretary.

Minutes of previous meeting read and accepted. Monthly Financial Statement presented. New members were admitted to Manchester, Chester-le-Street, Liverpool, Glasgow, North Shields, North London, South London, West London Branches, and the Parent Society. Details to date concerning the Annual Conference were before the meeting. It was agreed to issue a new edition of the Constitution and Rules of the N.S.S., including additions and revisions.

The Chairman reported progress in arrangements for the International Congress to be held in London in September.

Correspondence was dealt with from the North East Federation, and North West Federation of N.S.S. Branches, South London, West London and Blackburn Branches.

Messrs. Clifton, Bedborough and Elstob were elected on an Agenda Committee.

The date of the next Annual Dinner was fixed for Saturday, January 21, 1939.

R. H. ROSETTI,

General Secretary.

Obituary

JAMES ROBINS HOLMES

WE regret to announce the death of James Robins Holmes, which took place on March 17, his 79th birthday. His association with Freethought went back to the days of Charles Bradlaugh, with whom he had a long-standing personal acquaintance. As a regular reader of the *Freethinker*, he kept in touch with the movement until his death. A keen humanitarian and lover of nature he spent most of his life in East Hanney, amid beautiful surroundings, where he became a familiar figure to the villagers. In public affairs he served on the Wantage Rural District Council, the East Hanney Parish Council, and at his own expense carried out a number of improvements for the benefit of Hanney. His remains were cremated at Reading on March 21, and the ashes

brought to East Hanney, where before relatives, friends, and a large assembly of villagers, they were scattered by one of his sons at the base of Holmes's Oak in a beautiful spot in the village, acquired by the family, a Secular Address was read by Mr. R. H. Rosetti. To the widow and two sons we offer sincere condolence in their great loss.

CLARENCE DARROW

ON Sunday, March 13, at the City he loved, and where for many years he was one of the best known and best liked citizens, Clarence Darrow died of heart failure at the ripe age of 80.

No American Freethinker was more widely esteemed since Ingersoll died; nobody could claim better right to be called Ingersoll's successor—if so consummate a genius as Ingersoll could ever be said to have a successor—than this splendid orator, this admirable humanitarian, this friend of the underdog.

Darrow indeed was proud to follow the man he most admired. Ingersoll, he called "a Pioneer like Walt Whitman," another of Darrow's heroes. I first met Darrow in 1903, when Edwin Walker and Lilian Harman took me "down town" to meet "the future President of U.S.A." Darrow instantly began to talk about Whitman and Wordsworth and Tolstoy, because Miss Harman had intimated that I too shared these interests with Darrow. Darrow was getting married, and invited us to the "jollifications." So almost my first night in Chicago was spent in a steamer hired to accommodate a vast host of Darrow's friends for a "wedding-breakfast," which lasted till long after we had seen the sun rise on Lake Michigan.

Darrow lectured and debated Atheism and rationalist humanitarianism all over America as often as he could spare the time from his work as the most popular lawyer in the State of Illinois. From first to last Darrow was the great "Defender." Unique, perhaps, in this respect, Darrow never once in all his long career accepted a brief to PROSECUTE. He gladly placed his unrivalled skill and enthusiasm at the disposal of whatever blasphemer, rebel or outcast seemed to him most in need of a friend. He defended Anarchists when they were denied the right of free speech. Free lovers, Communists, Atheists, Mormons, or any other persecuted person could rely on an advocacy which was more often than not given without fee or reward.

His fame reached England mainly in connexion with two famous cases. He defended the two young millionaire murderers, Leopold and Loeb, whose guilt was incapable of denial. His speech—asking for a remission of the death sentence—was in my judgment the most eloquent, logical and human plea ever heard in a court of law on that subject. It will, I think, rank high amongst orations like Ingersoll's best. Darrow succeeded—and drew from the millionaire parents a fee which Darrow had insisted should be as low as that chargeable to his poorest client. Owing to scandalous lies of Christian critics, Darrow published his bill-of-costs, certified by the law society.

Darrow has defended many murderers and those accused of murder, and has never had a client sent to the chair (or gallows).

Darrow was asked to defend Mr. Scopes, the Dayton (Tennessee) teacher, who had been found guilty of "denying the Bible Story of Creation, and teaching instead that man had descended from a lower order of animals." Mr. W. J. Bryan, America's "silver-tongued orator" opposed Darrow. It was sad to see this Fundamentalist politician defending the Bible account of Creation in a court where Clarence Darrow mercilessly exposed its foolishness. Bryan broke down in court. He died soon after.

Darrow wrote one good novel and several books on the futility of punishment. He drew enormous audiences. He lived simply. He had no "exclusions"—he said he would just as soon share his meals with "bums" (tramps) as dine with the President, and he acted up to his unusual sentiment. He earned the affection of all who knew him. He said he liked the word "Atheist" better than any word in the language except "man."

GEORGE BEDBOROUGH.

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

OUTDOOR

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES BRANCH N.S.S. (Market Place): 7.30, Saturday night and Sunday night, Mr. J. W. Barker will speak at each meeting.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (White Stone Pond-Hampstead): 11.30, Sunday, Mr. L. Ebury. Parliament Hill Fields, 3.0, Sunday, Mr. L. Ebury.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 3.30, Sunday, Messrs. Bryant, Barnes, Tuson and Miss E. Millard, M.A.

INDOOR

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH (Alexandra Hotel, South Side, Clapham Common, S.W.4): 7.30, Annual General Meeting—Branch Members only.

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1): 11.0, Miss Marjorie Bowen—"Religious Enthusiasms—A Short Study."

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (The Laurie Arms, Crawford Place, Edgware Road, W.): 7.30, Mr. C. Burns—A Lecture.

COUNTRY

OUTDOOR

EDINBURGH BRANCH N.S.S. (The Mound): 7.0, Mr. Frank Smithies—"Darwinian Revolution."

INDOOR

BEDLINGTON (Co-operative Hall): 7.0, Wednesday, March 30, Mr. J. T. Brighton—"Are the Clergy Honest?"

BLACKBURN BRANCH N.S.S. (The Public (Lecture) Halls, Northgate, Blackburn): 7.45, Monday, March 28, Mr. Chapman Cohen—"Must We Have a Religion?" Reserved seats 6d. each.

BRADFORD BRANCH N.S.S. (Laycock's Forum, Albion Court, Kirkgate): 7.15, Mr. H. Day—"Twentieth Century Slavery."

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY (McLellan Galleries, Sauchiehall Street): 7.0, Mr. T. Wilson (Catholic Evidence League)—"Faith and Reason."

HETTON (Workmens' Club): 7.0, Tuesday, March 29, Mr. J. T. Brighton—"The Value of Freethought."

LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate): 6.30, Miss Clare Hollingworth (proposed Labour Candidate for Melton)—"German Influence in Central and South-east Europe."

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N.S.S. (Transport Hall, Islington, Liverpool, entrance in Christian Street): 7.0, John V. Shortt (Liverpool)—"Man's Supremacy."

MANCHESTER BRANCH N.S.S. (The Picture House, Market Street, Manchester): 7.0, Mr. Chapman Cohen—"Must We Have a Religion?" Reserved seats 6d. and 1s. each.

MIDDLESBROUGH (Labour Hall, Newport Road): 7.0, Monday, March 28, Mr. J. T. Brighton—"Freethought and Morality."

TEES SIDE BRANCH N.S.S. (Jubilee Hall, Leeds Street, Stockton): 7.30 Mr. J. T. Brighton—"Questions for Parsons."

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