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PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

	Page
More About Words—The Editor	593
The Old Order Changes—Mimmermus	595
Prague and London—Bayard Simmons	596
The International Congress—T. H. Elstob	597
And Jesus Opened His Mouth—Pro Reason	598
"Of Course you can Never be like Us."	
J. Y. Anderoney	599
England's Sabbath—H. Cutner	602
Is there Life on other Planets?—F. Kenyon	604
Who Are the Christians?—Idris L. Abraham	605

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

Views and Opinions

More About Words
A FEW weeks back I strongly commended a book by Mr. Stuart Chase (*The Tyranny of Words*, Methuen, 10s. 6d.). I am glad to know that quite a number of my readers have procured the work, and, intelligently read, it should stand for a course of intellectual training where such a course is necessary, but there are very few who could read it without benefiting thereby. *The Tyranny of Words* covers much of the ground I have been traversing for very many years. Among the earliest articles I wrote for this journal—over forty years ago—was a series on "The Tyranny of Speech," and times out of number I have reverted to that topic, because I regard it as a form of discipline which we all need. Nor is the lesson something that can be learned once and then put aside. It is a discipline that one needs constantly to put into practice, in the same way that the "daily dozen" (which I hasten to say I do not take) is necessary to keep one in the best physical condition. It is only clumsy thinkers, or those who mistake words for things, or are incapable of close thinking, who brush aside a controversy as being a mere quarrel about words. About what else should our controversies be if they are not about words? Consider the politician with his appeal to "Patriotism," the party leader with his slogan, the parson with his "love of God," and "the truth shall make you free," the ignoramus with his chatter about race, the sentimental ethicist with his praise of "goodness," the would-be philosopher with his chatter about "substance," and who falls over a chunk of it while declaring the impossibility of knowing it is there, or the teacher of what he thinks is a scientific theology, informing us that "the solidity of matter" no longer exists, and we find we are at once involved in a quarrel about words, because words form the only method of communication between human beings. Word-mongering really belongs far more to

the defenders of established positions than to critics of such positions; for the larger part of their power is drawn from the mere power of words over thought. Let these people change the form of words used, even though they may mean the same things, and their power is almost gone. The parson rolls out the words, "There is no hope for the world save in Jesus," and the congregation chants "Amen" in unthinking endorsement. Jesus is only another form of Joshua; but let the parson explain this to his congregation, and then say with all solemnity, "There is no hope for the world save in Joshua," and the congregation would be unaffected by it. This is true, not merely of religion, but of most other things. Talk about King George the Sixth, at the time of the Coronation, as an incarnation of the British people, and it was swallowed by large numbers without further thought. Say that he is an embodiment of the wisdom, the art, the literary and scientific culture of Britain, and the statement becomes grotesque. The language that was appropriate to an age of fetichism becomes glaringly absurd in an age in which intelligent people utilize fetichistic concepts for nursery entertainment. "Capitalist" carries with it every connotation of evil to one man that "Communist" does to another. Divest these words of their established associations, and we may get serious thinking. While they are used merely as war-cries, we get mainly noise.

* * *

The Power of Words

The trouble lies in the fact that while our thought is, when it is sanely scientific, concerned with the present and the future, and uses the past merely for the information it may yield, either as a guide or as a warning, we are compelled to use language that is fashioned to express forms of thinking which belong to an-ought-to-be-buried past. This is put very neatly in a small, able, but little known work, by Lady Welby, on *Significs and Language*.

We are now freely banning as superstition the animistic and mythical beliefs of our forefathers regarding the nature of things. Yet all the while we retain these very associations in our inherited language, the surface-sense only being altered, and the old associations being unconsciously, but coercively, called-up in the "subconscious" region whence come the most powerful of our impulses and tendencies.

Mr. Chase's book is, as I have already said, a very valuable contribution to what others have called "significs," and which has also received the name of "Semantics." A further contribution in terminology was made by Ogden and Richards in their outstanding work, *The Meaning of Meaning*, and altogether the study of this subject ought to bring about a cautiousness of both writers and speakers in the use of words, and a carefulness on the part of listeners

against the danger of being carried away by a verbal necromancy in virtue of which so many shams, religious, ethical and scientific, live. A further useful word coined, I think, by Ogden and Richards was "referent." By this is meant the fact that every important word used—any word, as a matter of fact—should refer to some aspect or fact in the world of our experience. And the real world is that in which we are living, not the dead world from which the modern and genuinely scientific world has emerged. To take a concrete example. The word religion is one in common use, and has been for thousands of years. But religion has always meant, until timid and time-serving, or unscientific minds tried to make it mean something else, a belief in what is called the supernatural. So when we find a man using the term "Religion," and we ask what is the referent, we find that most who hear the word immediately associate it with gods, and spirits, and an after-world, and all sorts of outworn ideas. Others give it a meaning that runs from this crude animism through all kinds of sociological and ethical meanings. It is no use replying that by "religion" the speaker means something else, since it is only when the terms used have a substantial identity of meaning for both speaker and listener that language can serviceably carry out its proper function. In the absence of this identity of "reference" the language deceives instead of enlightens both speaker and listener.

* * *

When Homer Nods

Mr. Chase provides many examples of the value of his thesis, and it is by way of showing its value that I offer a criticism of Mr. Chase, which will enforce the sanity of his teaching, and illustrate his method, by showing what happens when he himself slips. On page 97, after paying tribute to the value of the writing of various authors on the science of "semantics," he says that even these men have blind spots (I do not see how anyone can be free from them unless they invent an entirely new language) and concludes:—

The book you are reading has many of them. Presently, on these foundations, somebody will come along and give the study another forward push—progressively narrowing the margin of the unknown.

And that leaves me wondering how one manages to narrow the margin of the unknown? Mr. Chase does not make the mistake of Herbert Spencer, who related the "unknown" to the "unknowable" in such a way that it served the purpose of our fetichists as a substitute for "God." But I am afraid that the more acute religious readers of his work will not be slow to take this use of the "unknown" as a refuge for a God who has been successfully banished from the known.

It is indisputable that the more we know the greater the extent of our knowledge. To put it in this way is really to say the same thing twice, but in this case it is useful to do so. It is also true that in segregating a given number of problems to be solved in any branch of science, the more we solve the fewer are left to be solved, and in that way we are justified in saying that we are narrowing the margin of the unknown. But in dealing with knowledge, so that the term covers a progressively enlarging body of information and understanding, in what way can we be said to have narrowed the margin of the unknown? To use this phrase intelligibly we must take possible knowledge to consist of a definite amount, which we gradually assimilate until we have assimilated all, and then we have reached—what? The "referent" here seems of a quite indefensible character. Knowledge must be

centred in "me." But how does any knowledge that "I" or any other "me" may gain, decrease an unknown quantity or quality that lies beyond the regions of the known? There is, of course, a sense in which the unknown exists, but it is thought of as similar to the known in kind, and in this I prefer the simile of Spencer, that no matter how great the circle of knowledge may grow, it only means that the circumference which touches the unknown becomes progressively larger. Go as far as we may it is simply beyond the power of thought to imagine that there is nothing further to be thought about.

I should not be at all surprised if Mr. Chase agrees with all I have said, or that when he analyses what he has said (it occurs at the close of a chapter when many writers are apt to be a little careless) that he agrees with my criticism. Whether he would agree with my further analysis I am not quite so sure. But it does seem to me that in using the unknown as a definite quantity, which decreases as human knowledge grows, he has fallen into the same error as the Church, and also that of the philosophers at whom he so successfully tilts. For they both held that there existed a certain fixed body of knowledge, and that with the aid of the Church and God, and, that idol of the muddle-headed, "intuition," a complete system of knowledge could be acquired. Mr. Chase is really creating related categories where no such categories exist.

But this in no wise detracts from the value of Mr. Chase's work. It rather emphasizes it, for the best of teachers is the one who not merely teaches him to do without the teacher, but who because of his teacher is able to detect whatever errors the teacher has made. Mr. Chase is not a pioneer in this work of warring against the tyranny of speech; but he is a very fine recruit to the army of those who recognize that the dead past rules us by the language they have framed as well as by the institutions they have created. Language, as I have so often said, is a living mobile thing. When it is not mobile and changeful it is dead, at least it is very likely to have lost some of its vitality, and of its referential value so soon as it has been entombed in a dictionary, which is so often the deity of the semi-incapable. Language, like forms of life, should be constantly changing. I have given many examples of what I have here said in my *Primitive Survivals in Modern Thought*, for the present I conclude with the following from *The Meaning of Meaning*:—

In some ways the twentieth century suffers more grievously from the ravage of verbal superstitions. Owing, however, to developments of methods of communication, and the creation of many symbolic systems, the form of the disease has altered considerably; and apart from the survival of religious apologetic, now takes more insidious forms than of yore. Influences making for its wide diffusion are the baffling complexity of the symbolic apparatus now at our disposal; the possession by journalists and men of letters of an immense semi-technical vocabulary and their lack of opportunity, or unwillingness to enquire into its proper use; the success of analytic thinkers in fields bordering on mathematics, where the divorce between symbol and reality is most pronounced and the tendency to hypostatization most alluring; the extension of a knowledge of the cruder forms of symbolic convention . . . combined with a widening of the gulf between the public and the scientific thought of the age; and finally the exploitation, for political and commercial purposes, of the printing press by the dissemination and reiteration of clichés.

Which somehow brings us back to Locke, that words are the counters of wise men and the money of fools.

The Old Order Changes

"The common anthropomorphic ideas of God and the reliance on miracles must, and will, inevitably pass away."—*Matthew Arnold.*

"Naught may endure but mutability."—*Shelley.*

In Mark Twain's delightful skit, entitled *Adam's Diary*, each entry of "Sunday" has the comment "Pulled through." That described, tersely, the great humorist's opinion of the Puritanical Sabbath, and, incidentally, of Christianity itself. How things are altering! Once, Sunday observance was almost compulsory. Now, it is confined to the die-hards of Orthodoxy. In the Ages of Faith, if a man did not attend church, he was regarded as an infidel, and to be an infidel in those days meant that he risked his very life, for people were burnt alive for a difference of religious opinion.

To-day, Sunday observance is declining rapidly. Gladstone was wont to describe people who attended a place of worship only once on a Sunday as "Once-ers." In his restricted view every respectable person should be a "Twice-er," and he himself was not seldom a "Thrice-er." It would need a powerful microscope to find a "Twice-er" in smart society in these days. And only a mere section of working-class people keep up the practice. The real stronghold of religious observance has been for generations the Middle Class, and that itself is shrinking as rapidly as the once-formidable Liberal Party, which, formerly an army, is now but a corporal's guard.

With the cessation of church-going has come the cessation of family prayers, which, years ago, used to be a part of social life in the country. Another notable change in private observance is the abandonment of grace before meals. Bishop Willberforce used to tell a story of a greedy parson who, when asked to say grace, looked anxiously to see if there were champagne glasses on the table. If these were there, he began "Bountiful Jehovah!" But if he saw only claret glasses he said: "We are not worthy of the least of thy mercies."

Easter is the great festival of the Christian Church, and, years ago, "Holy Week," as it was called, was a close season for amusements of all kinds. All theatres were closed during that period. Even the church-services were double the usual length, and funereal in character. Rigidly orthodox people used to fast during Lent, although, to do them justice, they made up for the abstinence afterwards. Religious people are like that. The merry birthday of the "Man of Sorrows" is another case in point.

The priestly exploitation of death has affected custom. In Victorian times funerals were horrific. The deceased lay "in state" for a week, and relations, friends, and acquaintances filed past the coffin. On the day of the funeral the mourners fortified themselves with alcohol, and on the return from the cemetery a plentiful meal was served—with more drink. The hearse was surmounted with ostrich plumes, and these also adorned the horses heads. The undertakers wore long black cloaks, and carried sticks surmounted with black crape. It was an orgy of sentimentalism, and people wallowed in it. Even the songs of yesteryear reflected some of this morbid feeling. "Draw the curtain, Willie's dead," was a refrain that brought tears to the eyes of countless numbers. Indeed, our immediate ancestors loved songs overloaded with sickly sentiment; such as:—

"O dem golden slippers,
O dem slippers I'm going to wear
To walk the golden streets."

If one is inclined to be critical, it must be borne in

mind that the really popular poet of the nineteenth century was Longfellow, the best-selling novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and Spurgeon the preacher of the multitude, whose sermons were read throughout the English-speaking world.

How public ideas of religion are changing in this country is also shown by the disappearance of the old remark, "God willing." In Charles the Second's time the stage-coaches were advertised to do the distance between London and Bath (107 miles) in three days "if God permit"; but in 1780 the time had come down to two days, and the pious saving-clause was left out. "God permit" was a regular slang term for the old stage-coach. But a story is told of a village carrier, who upon being asked when he would be at Aberdeen, replied: "I'll be in on Monday, God willing and weather permitting, and on Tuesday whether or no."

D.V. are the initials that have dropped out of public notices, except in the case of small religious communities that are mere survivals of the past. *Deo Volente* is the proviso, "God willing." But the man and woman of to-day do not trouble to put such a proviso in ordinary announcements as to future events, and order their dinners and go journeys without worrying about all the gods of the Pantheon. Most people are Secularists in this respect at least, and the trend is away from Supernaturalism.

These customs, taboos, and restrictions are the products of a long-distant past, with its brutality and barbarism. Even in their present attenuated forms, as some of them survive in our own time, they are a reminder of the strangle-hold which Priestcraft once had over the lives and the liberties of men. We have, however, reached a stage in our civilization, when men are striving to mitigate and ameliorate the evils of priestly domination. It is still impossible to say with absolute certainty that England is a Christian country or a heathen country. Separate elements of both appear and reappear, but it is increasingly clear that the trend is definitely towards Secularism. The huge trust-funds, and other forms of wealth, of the Christian Churches may prolong the process of disintegration, but, sooner or later, the conscience of the race will have risen superior to the old-world ignorance and sheer barbarism associated with the Christian Superstition. Pull down the walls and let the free air of a common life blow over the place where they have been.

The present day is the twilight of the gods. Priests no longer call benefits or evil out of the sky beyond asking for fine or wet weather, or calling blessings on a few individual members of a prolific Royal family, or invoking blessings on battleships and regimental flags. The clergy are alert enough to realize that they could never succeed in praying for anything that pleased all. The old conception of a paternal deity has gone for ever, and the majority of men no longer believe in a limited-liability god, and that such a being can be influenced and swayed by the smell of sacrifice or the cries of entreaty. After the long and weary centuries of oppression the dawn has come:—

"Not by eastern windows only
When daylight comes, comes in the light,
In front the sun climbs slow, how slowly,
But westward, look, the land is bright."

MIMNERMUS.

The shining gold their crucible gives out;
But Faith, fanatic Faith, once wedded fast
To some dear falsehood, hugs it to the last.

Thomas Moore.

Prague and London

IMPRESSIONS AND A CONTRAST

THIS is being written in Conway Hall, on Sunday afternoon, at about half way through the sessions of the London Conference of the World Union of Freethinkers. Some of the most interesting events of the Conference are yet to come, and in due course they will be reported. But enough has already taken place to justify the forming of an impression—a personal impression—of the success of the Conference, and to make a contrast between it and the preceding Conference, that was held at Prague two years ago. The differences between the two Conferences are marked, but both in their different ways have strongly contributed to advancing the cause of Freethought.

No Conference meets *in vacuo*, and the time and surroundings of a Conference play an important part in settling its character. In this matter the difference between the two Conferences is immense. Two years ago the world was not in a state of profound peace, but actual fighting was only going on in a remote corner of Africa. The present unhappy state of the world is known to all, and the London Conference met under the shadow of what is grandiloquently called Armageddon. There is no doubt that this threat to European peace has affected adversely the attendance of many delegates, and the surprise is, that so many found it possible to come to London. Thus Russia, with its vast membership of *Bezbojniki* ("Godless"), was entirely unrepresented in London, while, on the other hand, the four or five Russian delegates at Prague played an important part in the work of that Conference. This absence of the Russian delegates is not without its humorous side when one recalls the uproar in Press and Parliament about the London Conference. It would almost seem that God had intervened, through his agent, Herr Hitler, on the side of Capt. Ramsay and his Christian friends.

Certainly the shadow of Nuremberg was in the back of the minds of the delegates, but I would not suggest that the added gravity of the time of meeting depressed the general cheerfulness of our gathering. Rather I would say, it added to our determination to do something to make such a reactionary horror as Fascism pass from our earth. Nevertheless one little incident may be recorded as showing the tension in the minds of some of the delegates. One charming Belgian lady asked me, after the few words of greeting (we had been at Prague together), what was the latest news of the crisis. My perhaps not very satisfactory reply was "Rien de nouveau"—nothing new. But when I went on to express the opinion that only two persons knew whether war would be loosed upon us within a week, namely, Herren Chamberlain and Hitler, she replied, "vous avez raison"—you are right. It is noteworthy, however, that the Czechoslovak delegates, who included a German, were the least perturbed people in our midst. Their President, Captain Voska, played a great part in the last set-to. His great activity for Freethought in his country ever since, is the measure of his conviction that only by right thinking can man be persuaded to act reasonably. Certainly the imperturbability of the Czechs equals their resolution.

Another difference that must at once strike one who was privileged to be at both Conferences is on the matter of *scale*. Mere size is, of course, a minor matter; it is spirit that counts, and in this connexion there is nothing to choose between Prague and London. The amiable Secretary of the International (Mlle. Pardon), informed me that the delegates other than British, numbered just under 70. Tickets issued

for British members of the four inviting societies were about 800. At Prague there were six English delegates, including two, Mr. Bradlaugh Bonner and Mr. Bayard Simmons, who attended this London Conference. And this is perhaps as good a place as any to speak of the indefatigable work which has made so great a success of the London Conference. The fact that the canvas, as it were, on which he worked was smaller than that of our Prague comrades two years ago, did not lighten his labours—rather the reverse. One must not holla until one is out of the wood, but so far everything has proceeded without a hitch.

At Prague, of course, one had the resources of a movement which boasts no less than four Freethought organizations. The largest of these is the Volna Myslenka, of which M. Voska is President, and Dr. Milde Secretary. Together they number more than 50,000 members. The city of Prague lent the Conference its largest hall, and everything was done by the municipality and the Czechoslovak Government to make the Conference a success. This is no place for a reflection on the two movements, Czechoslovak and British, but given the resources of the two national organizations, I feel that Freethinkers in Great Britain put up quite a good show. The Conway Hall made an admirable *venue* for the Conference, and it belonged to one of the inviting bodies. To adapt Shakespeare "a small thing but our own." Since the Prague Conference, Glasgow has made a start among British cities in receiving the delegates to our own N.S.S. Conference, but we are some way off from being received by King George at Buckingham Palace. President Benesh honoured himself, as well as the Conference, by receiving the leading delegates to that Conference in the Hradcany, a Presidential Palace that rises so majestically over the ancient city of Prague.

To return to London. The London Conference will have, I believe, a prominent place in the Freethought movement in this country and the world. It is half a century since the Conference has returned to the place of its birth, a return fraught with good things for us and our Continental comrades. Personally I am glad that one effect of this coming to England is that English has now definitely established itself as one of the languages of the World Union. This, after all, is as it should be, for our own tongue is more widely spoken than any other. At Prague the entire proceedings were conducted in French or German, with one or two speeches in Czech and Russian. If the United States and the British Dominions are to play the rôle in our International Conferences that they should, the tacit admission of English speech now established will be of great help. It is to be regretted that no delegation from the U.S.A. was in London.

One difference between the Prague and London Conferences was not on the surface. At Prague, behind a façade of public speeches and lectures, a friendly struggle was going on in committee rooms, which resulted in the amalgamation of what may be termed, for brevity, the Old Freethought International and the Proletarian Freethinkers. This fusion has undoubtedly resulted in the strengthening of our movement internationally, and has had none of the dire consequences feared by too timid souls. After all one has only to look at the burly and genial Professor, Dr. Terwagne, and our own indefatigable Mr. Bradlaugh Bonner, to realize that their activities have nothing in them of the madcap, and "red ruin and the breaking up of laws."

It is, indeed, to be feared that we fell sadly short of what was expected of us by our Christian friends. I am sure that the four or five patient policemen who hung about our doorway, must have regarded us as a pretty tame and respectable lot. For this little guard

to our proceedings we, of course, have to thank the Home Secretary and his "dear Ramsay."

At Prague we had a bit of colour, for the Czechs, like all Slavs, love gay colours in dress. Here in sober England, I espied only two variants from the normal, a Scottish visitor in a kilt, and our able and charming friend, Mr. R. Mohamed of the Rationalist Association of India, who gave a most interesting account of Freethought in the vast Indian Peninsula. He looked a striking, if modest, figure in his shawl, or sort of cassock worn by the Indian educated classes.

A final word or two about a subject that was a bitter-sweet for us British delegates, specially those belonging to the National Secular Society. That was the presence and the absence of our leader, Mr. Chapman Cohen. As is generally known, Mr. Cohen is suffering, to put it bluntly, from overwork, and is in great need of rest. He delighted us, however, by coming from his sick-bed to receive the delegates on Friday evening, and even gave us a brief speech. On Saturday morning too he paid the Conference a flying visit. That he should be laid aside (except for his indomitable will) at such a moment is again, one must suppose, the intervention of God. If so, we have a double reason for abolishing so troublesome a spoil-sport.

BAYARD SIMMONS.

The International Congress

AN IMPRESSION

FREETHOUGHT for once, in England, has "got into the news." The Newsbill of the *Star* on the first day of the Congress was

FREETHINKERS

and the very first column of that lively journal was given over to a friendly article on our Conference, in which, with sufficient plainness, all those who would have suppressed the gatherings by means of the secular arm were dealt with contemptuously and classed with witch-smellers and heresy-hunters. The article was most discouraging to the religious bigot. The same note could be traced in the *Daily Telegraph*, which allowed a correspondent to reply to the Duchess of Norfolk, who had been expressing Romanish charity according to pattern, asking that lady what right she had to assume that those who ran the Conference were less high principled than she.

Other papers, I am informed, either were (relatively) friendly or kept silent. There has been no time as yet for a systematic inspection. But "getting into the news" has always been realized by Freethinkers to be a mixed blessing. It occasions misgivings. Pioneer movements have an instructive dislike to becoming popular. It suggests to them a change of occupation. Pioneers are always in the van, and to be in the van means that popularity must be forfeited. But at the present moment there is a substantial purpose to be served even by a demonstration of strength. Ingersoll once said—and one cannot afford to neglect its import—that the Churches never left off burning heretics until the number of them grew too large for easy handling. The forces that Freethought is up against to-day are of the texture that is unimpressed by ethical considerations, but they are impressed by numbers—and numbers only.

Everything so far in connexion with the Congress has gone off excellently (I am writing on Sunday after-

noon). The unfortunate illness of Mr. Chapman Cohen, our President, only allowed him to make a minimum of appearances. But in the circumstances there were few that did not feel glad that "Providence" had allowed so much. A dramatic moment at the Conference occurred at the Reception, which Mr. Cohen attended. Dr. Terwagne, the President of the World Union, shook Mr. Cohen's hand in full view of the assembled gathering, expressing at the same time his admiration for his courage at leaving a sick bed in order to welcome the delegates.

The Reception on Friday evening was well attended and was a happy gathering. All the responsibility for that part of the programme, financial and otherwise, was that of the South Place Ethical Society, and their efforts to make the welcome of the delegates a cordial one were beyond praise. An interlude of music and singing was highly appreciated. Miss Daisy Kennedy rendered violin selections in her own inimitable way, while Madame Sophie Wyss sung beautifully some very appropriately selected airs.

The creature comforts of the guests were also attended to excellently—a difficult task when numbers were so problematical—there was not the slightest hitch observable at any point. All the foreign delegates were most cordially received. If there was a noticeably increased warmth in the reception accorded the representatives of Spain and Czechoslovakia the reasons are not far to seek. Heroism stirs the blood more than other virtues. It was a pity that the language difficulty was such a real one in so many cases. All the foreign delegates will understand without difficulty that a shake of the hand is the only method in the absence of language of expressing the most heartfelt and poignant emotion.

The quality of the addresses was very high, and fortunately these will be obtainable in a permanent form. The addresses proved all the more enjoyable because of the occasional divergencies of view. That these divergencies occur is of course a sign of health, and must be expected. The "disease of orthodoxy" must never be allowed to enter into a Freethought Conference. To have a congress of single mind would be to rob Freethought of its very name and significance. One or two of the papers in the educational session cut rather markedly across each other, but this was as it should be, and only means that the differences thus ventilated were important and needed further close consideration. At any rate the audience enjoyed it all.

It would be a mistake to individualize where all—speakers, interpreters and helpers—did so well. And no one we suspect needs such individualization. All are content to have done what they could to help on the fight which animates men of all races, and recognizes no frontiers and no authority, but simply stands for the dignity and freedom of the human mind. The cheerfulness which accompanies communion of spirit was visible in every face. There was no sign of a hidden hand or a cloven hoof.

For a moment one thought one had detected one of the outcomes of Russian Gold. A crocodile of girls, young men, negroes, etc., was parading the streets with sandwich boards. On one of the bills were the words

RELIGION IS A SNARE AND A RACKET

This alarming statement, on inspection, proved to be an attempt to exploit (a racket!) the interest in Freethought in order to help fill the Albert Hall, where Judge Ruthford, the inventor of the slogan, "Millions who are now alive will never die" was speaking. We know, of course, full well that the belief in a

very extended existence is not always marked in this world by scrupulosity of conduct.

The session on Science and the Churches was perhaps the high light of the Conference. Here well-known scientific men in England spoke of the gods as gods should be spoken of, without a tremor and without a sigh. The ovation afforded Prof. J. B. S. Haldane will live in one's memory. It was undoubtedly a tribute both to his able contribution and to his personality. His humorous touches when dealing with the tendencies of the unco guid to subject science to the minutest inspection in order to obtain specimens of their own vices (a tendency he did not deprecate) were very delicious.

Then there were Mr. A. and Miss B. O yes, and on to Z. One must not forget, however, one's good resolutions.

To everyone who has laboured to make the Congress a success, congratulations. It is not over yet, but its success is assured. We know that all has been a labour of love. They have helped to discourage and defeat—each man or woman in his own way—an Archbishop's *Recall to Religion*. They have helped positively to keep alert and vigilant the roving free spirit of man in a supremely dangerous moment of the world's history. Such work, whatever history has in store for us, cannot be lost. And it is quite a positive work as well to inform the meaner and more intolerant portions of mankind that they will never break our spirit; there is no word for "lying down" in the vocabulary of Freethought.

T. H. ELSTON.

And Jesus Opened His Mouth

CHRISTIAN: "The sayings of Jesus should appeal to all mankind. Their wisdom and sublimity are unsurpassed."

Sceptic: "Some sayings attributed to Jesus were current long before his alleged appearance on this earth. His biographers were plagiarists."

C.: "Do you cast doubt on the incidents in his life, such as, say, his miraculous birth, his miracles, and his resurrection and ascension?"

S.: "They are paralleled in the lives of other gods who preceded him, and are simply a reproduction of imaginary events, said to have happened long before the Christian era."

C.: "But were not his sayings and doings reported by persons who claimed to be personally conversant with them?"

S.: "Assuming, for the sake of argument, that such a person as the Gospel Jesus really existed, and uttered many wise maxims and performed certain unusual deeds, what proof is there that these happenings were reported correctly? Is it not more than probable that they were greatly exaggerated?"

C.: "We must assume that the reporters were people of integrity with a strict regard for the truth."

S.: "A somewhat fanciful assumption! In their days phonography and the printing press were unknown, and their 'facts' must have been recorded largely from hearsay which, I think you will admit, is more often than not, a feeble foundation to build upon."

C.: "I see no reason to believe that their reports were not as reliable as the information disseminated in our newspapers."

S.: "The exploits of Jesus were recorded by unknown persons several years after they were said to have happened, whereas the newspapers record cur-

rent events, and then only after their expert reporters have satisfied themselves that the news is substantially correct. Even with this precaution it is, as you know, a comparatively common occurrence for their contributions to comprise many important omissions and mistakes. A few years ago a well known author wrote a book descriptive of a certain part of England, after visiting the locality and obtaining his details from the residents. I am sure he would not purposely diffuse false information, nevertheless, in his book, there was an assertion of a personal nature so utterly opposed to the truth that it aroused considerable astonishment, not unmingled with amusement, among those, including myself, familiar with the facts. In all probability the next generation of readers of this book will treat the mis-statement as an established fact. All this shows how necessary it is to exercise caution when dealing with written statements *even by persons known to be above suspicion*. In these circumstances what value can be placed on conflicting descriptions of dubious incidents made by unknown people long after they are said to have happened? *None at all.*"

C.: "If their reports were unreliable how do you account for the strength of Christianity? A religion like Christianity is not likely to have been founded on false premisses."

S.: "There are other powerful religions in the world. Why should Mohammedanism, Hinduism, and Buddhism have been founded on false premisses to a greater extent than Christianity? The evidence these religions can furnish in support of their origin is as 'reliable' as that produced by the followers of Christianity. The Christian religion owes its birth and existence to man's innate credulity and superstition, fostered by a powerful priesthood largely in pursuit of its own ends. If bishops, priests and pastors were deprived of their emoluments, the Christian religion would soon automatically cease to exist. The premisses upon which it was built have been shown to be false."

PRO REASON.

WASHINGTON OR PAINE?

The visit of American "Pilgrims" to Sulgrave Manor—and the Independence Day Broadcast which the B.B.C. arranged at the same ancient home of George Washington's family, stirred the *East Anglian Magazine* to the following plea for a visit to Thetford:—

Admirers of East Anglia's Thomas Paine may well enquire why the home of George Washington's ancestors should be a more appropriate place for a broadcast than is Thetford. Some of Tom Paine's more ardent admirers may even go so far as to ask: Why, for that matter, George Washington? And they will tell you that Thomas Paine did more to bring about the Declaration of American Independence than did George Washington himself. Certain it is that he perceived the idea—and believed in the idea and publicized the idea—long before Washington recognized its practicability or even its desirability. He has been called, in fact, "the man who converted George Washington to a belief in America."

The celebration of Independence is not a commemoration of greatness. If it were, East Anglia's humble Paine could hardly be matched against so mighty a name as that of Washington.

But a celebration of Independence is a celebration of Independence, and the rightful name to couple with it is that of the man who did most to make the break with England an actual accomplishment. Thomas Paine, at least, qualified for that distinction.

And the point then arises that the pilgrims to Sulgrave Manor on this Day of Independence would be better occupied in visiting the stone-built cottage in Thetford, where the restless spirit of Tom Paine was first given its earthly cloak.

"Of Course You can never be like Us"

AUSTRALIAN Daily papers provide a lot of entertainment, from day to day, at the expense of the shining lights of the various churches. Take, for example, the following report of a case—published throughout the length and breadth of the Continent—just heard in Melbourne:—

Mrs. Joan Rosanove, who appeared for Miss Deverall, said that Father Cremin had told Miss Deverall that if she gave up her ambition to become a nurse, and looked after him instead, he would see she had a home for life. Both Father Cremin and Miss Deverall swore to this, and she began work at 15s. a week, later receiving as much as £2 a week.

From this money Miss Deverall had helped Father Cremin at various times, when Father Cremin had got into difficulties over the stabling and training of race-horses which he owned. In 1933, Father Cremin had received instructions from Archbishop Mannix and Monsignor Loneragan, the then Administrator of the Diocese, as a result of which, he said, he would have to dismiss her. Mrs. Rosanove produced letters, which, she said, were from Archbishop Mannix and Monsignor Loneragan.

One letter, attributed to Archbishop Mannix, said he wished Father Cremin to make a change in his domestic staff within a week, and the one from Monsignor Loneragan expressed surprise that Father Cremin's promises to Archbishop Mannix had not been fulfilled, and demanded that Father Cremin see his Grace immediately.

Replying to Mr. Norman O'Bryan, K.C., for Father Cremin, Miss Deverall said it was true she disagreed with Father Cremin's curate, but she said that "Pat" did not want her to go.

Mr. O'Bryan: Would you mind calling him Father Cremin? You are not always as demure as you appear this morning. Have you ever carried a gun?

Miss Deverall: No. I am afraid of firearms.

Mr. O'Bryan: I suggest that at the end of last year, when you were not getting the assistance you thought you should, you fired a gun at Father Cremin.

Miss Deverall: I did not. I would be afraid to fire a gun.

Mr. O'Bryan: But you were spoken to by the police at Bunyip.

Miss Deverall: Yes, I had a row with Father Devlin, and he called me a blackmailer.

Miss Deverall said she had paid £100 deposit on a house. Father Cremin had given her £60, which she had won as an investment on Full Hand, one of Father Cremin's horses. She had also won other money on horses.

Judge MacIndoe granted Mr. O'Bryan's application for a non-suit on the ground that if there had been a contract, it had been voided through uncertainty.

The previous week a father was charged in Sydney (N.S.W.) with carnally knowing his 14-years-old daughter. There were two sisters about the same age. The evidence revealed that it was a Catholic family. Declaring it was a conspiracy to get him out of the way, the father stated that he had overheard a conversation between the two sisters, in which one said to the other, "It is ridiculous not allowing us to go out with boys. Why, girls of 13 have boy friends." The other had replied, "Even if we do have to swear on the Bible we will be forgiven if we confess." The father was acquitted.

Confession, you will appreciate from this, certainly has a great deal to commend it!

We turn to an item from Auckland (N.Z.), humorously illustrative of the proneness of the saint to become the sinner under a little judicious temptation: "Wiremu Wetara, a Maori, was fined £1 at the Police Court for stealing a coat. His solicitor said that the defendant and his father were pillars of the Church in the north, and that he had attended the Maori mission in Auckland the previous Tuesday. Defendant, who was ordained a lay preacher, was not used to liquor, but foolishly consented to drink with friends."

It would be a pity not to include the following, which comes from Ballarat (Victoria), as follows:—

"My first duty is to God," said the Rev. Charles Anderson in the City Court to-day.

Anderson, an Anglican, had been asked if it were not more important to render assistance to an injured man than to hurry to a service.

He was fined £4, with £4 costs, for having driven a motor-car negligently, and £2 for having failed to stop and give assistance after an accident.

A stay of proceedings for a month was granted.

An art metal worker, of Coburg, Melbourne, was knocked unconscious when his motor cycle came into collision with Anderson's car.

Charles Maynard, of Coburg, who was on the pillion, said Anderson did not come back to see if Brown was all right.

Relying to Sergeant Thomas, who asked the question about his duty, Anderson said: "I think service to God comes first. There were several people there to attend to the man, and I could do nothing."

Mr. A. R. Hill, P.M.: Can I understand you to say that it is more important to attend church than to take a man, who may be dying, to hospital? You didn't know whether there was anybody to take care of him or not, and you say your duty was not to the man?

Anderson: It is very difficult to decide.

Mr. Hill: I should say your duty to the injured man comes first. Why did you not make arrangements for somebody to look after him?

Anderson: At a time like that, you don't always think what you should do.

Mr. Hill: Actually you did not do anything to assist him.

Anderson denied that he had not stopped his car.

"I did what I thought necessary, in going back to see the injured man," he said.

"There was someone leaning over Brown, who was on the ground. The church bells were ringing."

After the service he sent a man to report the accident, he said.

Yes, the Church Bells were ringing! All these things force themselves into our daily papers—papers, by the way, that would recoil from publishing a line from a contributor in the way of intelligent, adverse criticism of the Bible. All the more welcome is it, then, that the protagonists of Christianity should provide the incidents and episodes I have here cited. As Ichobod Bronson ("The Belle of New York") used to sing, "Of course you can never be like us; but be as like us as you're able to be." Very aptly satirized, in these words, are the Gospel-ex-pounders who presume to guide us—the while betraying themselves and their creed to derisive contempt.

J. Y. ANDERONEY.

Sydney, N.S.W., Australia.

Acid Drops

It was stated at a recent Baptist meeting that if Sunday School attendances continue to decrease at the present rate, there will be no Sunday School scholars left at the end of the next twenty-five years. We are not so optimistic as was this speaker, and do not expect such an epidemic of intelligence as the realization of this forecast assumes. We do expect that in proportion as parents develop a better sense or responsibility, and as the young people develop a sense of independence and personal responsibility Sunday Schools will continue to decline, but to imagine they will disappear in twenty-five years sounds like the promised good times which is part and parcel of political electioneering talk by each party if only it is placed in power.

But the root evil is not the training of children to be Christian, Jew, or Mohammedan. The cardinal sin is using the child as an instrument of propaganda for particular opinions, whether the opinions be religious or other. The child should be taught from its earliest years that it has an indefeasible right to question every opinion that is placed before it. It is no part of a parent's duty to turn out his child an efficient footballer or motor-cycle driver or cricketer. It is a parent's duty to see that his child is as physically fit as it is possible for him to be, and then leave it to him to say what branch of physical exercise he shall make his own. The parents of one generation are never so impeccable, in physical, mental, or other qualities to be justified in turning out children that are mere copies of their predecessors.

An "Anglo-Catholic of seventy years standing complains that while there is anxiety about peace in Europe, there has been no special prayers "for the guidance of the Holy Spirit." "Anglo-Catholic" should remember that the King of this country was dowered with "the grace of God" only a short time back, and it surely cannot have all worn off in this short period. Moreover, there is a bench of bishops in the House of Lords, and a chaplain in the House of Commons, who every time the House gathers prays to God to endow its members with wisdom and understanding. What more does "Anglo-Catholic" want? Besides one must have patience. The British clergy started praying for victory in 1914, and the Lord did not make up his mind until 1918. One must give God Almighty time.

We do not know with what truth, but we see it stated that some eighty-per-cent of the religious objects sold to the Irish people are imported by Jews. The "religious objects" refer to the crucifixes, beads, pictures of the virgin and of the divine baby in his cradle, and so forth. There seems to be a certain fitness about this. Theoretically the Jews gave the world Christianity, and having given to the world that religion, it lies in the fitness of things that they should supply the "furniture" required for its continuation.

The only other theory that suggests itself is that the Jews knowing the persecution they were due to undergo at the hands of Christians, took an anticipatory revenge by giving them the religion they have. In that case, when the Jew complains of ill-treatment at the hands of Christians, the latter has the right to reply, "You began it."

We have also seen it stated that Russia has banned all *Christian* names for *Russians*. This follows the banning of alleged "Jewish" names by Hitler. Really, if the world could only cultivate a due sense of humour most of these dictatorships would be laughed out of existence.

The *Scottish Daily Express* has been concerning itself about a remark made by the Rev. J. G. Fleming, a Territorial Chaplain. This gentleman said that one in two of Scottish youths had never heard of the New Testament. So in order to test the accuracy of this the *Express* sent out its reporters, who interviewed four youngsters. One had certificates for Bible knowledge, another "taught young children in Sunday schools" a third and fourth also gave evidence of a Sunday School atmosphere. As if four carefully chosen examples could be cited as typifying Scottish Youth. But it is evidence of what the daily press considers to be scientific method.

Even then it would be difficult for a devoted religionist to get any comfort from the result of the paper's activities. One said she had got certificates for Bible knowledge, and yet didn't know the names of the four evangelists. Another said, "I don't pretend to know who wrote your Apocalypse or whatever you call it." A third said, "I teach young children in a Sunday School all about the parables, although I have never gone deeply into the Bible." And the Rev. James F. Kellas of Aberdeen despairingly tells us:—

It is surprising the number of young people who do not know the fundamentals of the New Testament. Not so long ago I was talking to a university student who had never read the Life of Jesus Christ.

It would be a mistake to consider this state of affairs as auguring for the progress of Freethought. After all a good knowledge of the Old Book doesn't always ensure a good Christian. In the Bible there is bane and antidote. What is unfortunate is that an atmosphere is created in schools in favour of the Bible not being as other books, and this loads the dice in the direction of the Bibliolator when the child comes to years of discretion. It is knowledge of this fact which makes the theologian so eager to retain the Bible in the Public Schools, even though the instruction is only what they call Simple Bible Teaching.

It is difficult to please Christians! Surely one of those things which Christians should love and take joy in fulfilling, is "The Will of God." But no! The Rev. Ronald Spivey says:—

It is unfortunate that "Thy Will be done" is a phrase which we have come to associate more with the sorrows than the joys of life.

Of course poor Abraham didn't really LIKE killing his beloved son, but how well he disguised his hate of the god whose "Will" he nearly succeeded in doing. We have seen so many tombstones bearing the words "Thy Will Be Done," that we should be justified in taking for granted that most Christians regard God as mainly a murderer.

A writer in the *British Weekly* writes on "Pleasure and Happiness." It is part of the Puritan protest against human happiness to pretend that these two words are nor synonyms. Dr. England in the article referred to says:—

Even the pure moralist is aware that in order to obtain the highest pleasure one must pursue something else; pleasure being a kind of by-product of other pursuits.

This is merely verbiage. Happiness, or pleasure or joy is a natural desire. "The pursuit of happiness" is a human necessity. A little commonsense philosophy tells us that we are likely to get more happiness (pleasure) by creating and maintaining social conditions, public health, and general friendliness than by merely thinking in terms of unenlightened self-interest. Just as Blake said that "A tear is an intellectual thing," so we say that happiness needs science and study for its acquisition.

"Everyone in Chiswick is proud of our bells," deliberately fibs the Rev. S. Osborne Goodchild, vicar of Turnham Green Church, in face of complaints that the ringing disturbs people's rest! With typical clerical insolence he scoffs at the objectors, and refuses to stop the ringing. We have often wondered why peaceful neighbourhoods should have this unnecessary clamour still inflicted upon them. Most church bells are as harsh and tuneless as a stewpan struck with a ladle. But, of course, the stupid survival is merely a form of advertising similar to the bell-clanging in a fair-ground. The message of the church bells is: "Walk up! Walk up, ladies and gents, and hear the 'Lively Oracle' as recommended by the Archbishop of Canterbury and all the leading nobles! Just about to commence!—Give her another pull or two, George!"

There's £17,000 a year waiting for two favoured clerks. Sorry, you poor "pen-pushers" it's for clerks "in holy orders" only. The Bishops of London (£10,000) and Durham (£7,000) are retiring. No, no: not in their natures, friends, but from their jobs. Then they'll have to be content with a third of their "stipend" as pension. What the penurious Bishop of London is going to do, God only knows! He continuously wailed over his £10,000 a year,—as, no doubt he would have done had he received as much as the old "Prince-Bishops" of Durham used to receive—£40,000 per annum! (By the way, one of the last of these prelates enriched the fortunes of the Bridge-water family, and he was—the *Evening Standard* diarist informs us—an ancestor of the present Lord Brownlow, whose place, Ashbridge, was bought to serve as a sort of training college for young Tories. Yes: "stipends" can be stupendous).

Fifty Years Ago

PLEBISCITES don't count in the realms of Truth. Voting is powerless to decide what is true and what is false. Time will show. The Christians themselves might remember that there was an overwhelming vote against *their* creed when Jesus Christ was arrested and his disciples all "skedaddled."

The Freethinker, September 16, 1888.

THE FREETHINKER

FOUNDED BY G. W. FOOTE

61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4

Telephone No.: CENTRAL 2412.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. PABLO.—We are not surprised at what happened. Direct speaking is not always welcome.

C. HARPUR.—Thanks for suggestion. Will enquire.

H. BLACK.—Thanks for good wishes. We know they are genuine.

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

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

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

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

Sugar Plums

The Conference of the World Union of Freethinkers is over, and we think we may say, modestly, that it was a complete success. Representatives were present from Belgium, France, Luxemburg, Holland, Czechoslovakia, Spain, Russia, Germany (Refugees), U.S.A., India, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Hong Kong, Portugal, Mexico, Poland, Yugo Slavia, and had the International situation been a different one a larger number would have been present. The papers and speeches were on a very high level, and most of these will be reprinted in book-form. We shall print next week a general report of the Conference proceedings, and there is no need to go over the same ground twice. All that need be said here is that there were present a large number of visitors from all over the country, and the threatened outburst of force by enraged citizens that Cardinal Hinsley hinted at, did not materialize. What did appear was a large poster by the Lord's Day Observance Society, of which Sir Thomas Inskip is or was President, and which reminded us that anthropologists may still find living representatives of the Stone Age.

There is only one thing to lament concerning the Sunday evening Public Meeting. This is that the Scala Theatre was not twice the size; but we must assume that the architects had not an International Freethought Conference in view when the building was designed. But from the front row of the stalls, up through dress circle, upper circle, and gallery, every seat was occupied, and in addition to a full stage, all the permitted standing room was covered. And there were large numbers turned away. The Chairman, Mr. Cohen, opened the meeting just two or three minutes after seven, and there was no mistaking the warmth of his welcome when he came upon the platform. He had been unable to take any part in the proceedings of the Conference, beyond speaking at the re-

ception of the delegates on the Friday evening and at the Scala meeting, and taking the chair at the dinner on the Monday evening. He is none the worse for doing what he did, at least not observably worse, and it was only under the promise not to go farther than this that he gained medical permission to attend.

The speeches at the Scala Demonstration went with a swing. From the moment the Chairman opened the meeting until its close at just on half-past ten—three and a half hours, the audience sat interested and appreciative. The fact of an audience sitting so long indoors on a fine evening, was a tribute to the quality of the speeches delivered. Nearly all the speeches—those by Professor Hogben, Mr. G. D. H. Cole, and Mr. Langdon Davies—particularly emphasized the necessity for direct and uncompromising action where Freethought is concerned. But the speaker who took the heart of the meeting was unquestionably Captain Voska, who represented Czechoslovakia. Captain Voska spoke in English, and his simplicity of phrasing and the quiet dignity of determination with which he spoke, carried all before it. M. Sacher, also of Czechoslovakia, spoke in German, as representative of the Freethinking Sudeten Germans, and so gave the lie to the statement that so many of our papers permitted to gain currency, that the Sudeten Germans were wholly Hitlerian. Another very warm greeting was given to the Spanish speaker, Senor Abad, who addressed the meeting in Spanish. He was a very able speaker so far as we could judge in the absence of an understanding of Spanish. The Spanish and the German speeches were summarized in English for the benefit of the audience by Mr. C. B. Bonner and Mr. Joseph McCabe. Altogether it was a great evening.

The Organizing Committee of the Conference wish to express their regret to those who were unable to gain admission. Many protested at being shut out, seeing that there was some standing room vacant. But the L.C.C. rules regarding theatres are very strict. All gangways must be kept clear, and no more than a given number of people may be permitted to stand. It was a very thankless task to refuse admission to so many who had probably travelled a distance, but no one could exceed the regulations.

There was a gallant gathering at the Trocadero Restaurant, on Monday evening last. The speakers included Dr. C. E. M. Joad, who proposed the toast to "Freethought"; Mr. Cohen who, as Chairman, gave the toast "The Prosperity of the World Union of Freethinkers," which was acknowledged in an interesting speech by Dr. Terwagne, the President of the World Union; "To our Friends Abroad," proposed by Mr. Joseph McCabe, and acknowledged by M. Lorulot (France), and M. Mildi (Czechoslovakia). The last toast was to "The Chairman," by the Secretary of the World Union, Mademoiselle Pardon, who took occasion to say some very charming and flattering things of Mr. Cohen, and the high esteem in which he was held by Freethinkers abroad. In addition to these there was an interesting speech by Mr. H. G. Wells on the need of our developing a conception of Freethought that would operate irrespective of colour or nationality, and a conception of freedom that would abolish many of the social tyrannies existing within our own Empire. Mr. Henry Nevinston also brought forward before the assembly the fact of a movement in favour of placing a tablet on the house inhabited by the late Edward Clodd, whose work for Freethought was so well known and appreciated. A sum of £25 is required. The Treasurer is Mr. C. A. Watts, Johnson's Court, Fleet Street, London, E.C.4., to whom all subscriptions should be sent. The meeting continued until 11.30 p.m., when every one departed in the highest of spirits and, we hope, with an inspiration to advance further the great cause of mental emancipation.

Mr. Cohen, to his great regret, was unable to take the part in the proceedings of the Conference he would have wished; but, as he had only been allowed to leave his room a few days before the opening of the Conference, he had to proceed cautiously. His share in the Congress

was a few words of welcome to the delegates on Friday Evening, September 9, and the occupancy of the chair at the Scala meeting and the Trocadero Dinner. Part of Tuesday he spent at the *Freethinker* office, and is none the worse for his efforts over the week-end. But he has to go cautiously, and as soon as possible he will take a holiday of a week or two. He will still be active with his pen, but correspondents must be patient for awhile. He hopes to be able to fulfil his engagements in October, but that must be decided in the course of the next week or two. He owes it to the solicitude of his friends and their expressions of concern, to take whatever care is possible.

The stewarding of the meetings was excellent. This branch was under the supervision of Mr. Rosetti, who worked very hard, and had his reward in the result. But, particularly at the Scala meeting, the ease with which the large number of people were handled, and the good temper with which the people submitted to the regulation, were a very high compliment to the stewards at all meetings. The Organizing Committee owes these voluntary helpers a debt of gratitude. The success of the Conference depended very much upon the willing co-operation of numbers who were willing to find adequate reward for labour expended in the result achieved.

As is usual in such cases the greater part of the work of conducting a Conference of the dimensions of the World Union, does not bulk largely before the public. The Committee worked together with absolute unity, and Mr. C. B. Bonner and Mr. Blackham, who acted as Joint Secretaries, found no task too arduous. Mr. Bonner, who is almost a linguistic freak, was indispensable, and his close acquaintance with the personnel of Freethought leaders abroad helped to remove many difficulties that arose. The amount of work involved was best represented by the smooth and comfortable manner in which the whole of the Conference from the beginning to the end proceeded. Finally, the South Place Ethical Society very kindly placed its hall at the service of the Conference, and acted as hosts for all the members and delegates at the Friday evening reception.

The newspaper press behaved—like the newspaper press. Hardly a line appeared in the papers of Monday morning. Considering the crusade of lying and slander that had been carried out by a section of the Christian world, and the wholesale lying—conscious lying—of the Roman Catholic pulpit and press, one would have expected that at least summarized reports of the speeches at the Scala meeting would have been given. The English papers lived up to their reputation. It must be said that in the course of the campaign of slander that has been going on for more than a year, some of the religious papers have protested, and many individual clergymen have also protested against any attempt being made to suppress the Conference. The *Star*, which remained modestly, or cautiously silent—until it was quite clear that the Conference would take place—on the Friday evening published a front page article, in which the writer, while very careful to guard himself against being thought to be in opinion on the side of the uncompromising Freethinker, put in a plea for toleration. The article would have been more impressive had it appeared with equal publicity when the religious bigots were in full cry. But that is the way of the *Star*, and of all that are in any way open to suspicion that it may be heretically inclined. They are so afraid of being found out.

We are never surprised at the way the British press acts. While the Conference was "news" full play was given to the suggestions that the Conference should be suppressed, and a very careful supervision was exercised of letters of protest, sometimes suppressing them altogether. Meredith said that woman would be the last thing man would civilize. We think we may say that the British press will be the last thing in Britain that will practise complete fairness in its handling of news and events.

It comes back to what G. W. Foote said more than once. The Freethought movement owes nothing to the press. It has not helped to make us, therefore it cannot break us. We have grown up independently of the general press and will continue to grow in the same way. Newspapers will act with fairness towards the Freethought movement when it is in a position to command sufficient public notice to assure people that they may quite safely declare their real opinions. Our rule must always be to press forward, caring for neither the enmity of avowed enemies or the cautious advices of timid friends. "Courage, again Courage, always Courage."

The International Congress has had some peculiar reactions. Here, for example, is an excerpt from *Protestant Action* for September 3:—

On September 18 the Papists in London will march through certain streets as an act of reparation to Almighty God, because Freethinkers are being allowed a Congress in London. There has been no singing, talking, and no banners. They are just going to walk and pray; or, in other words, look silly. To be precise, just look natural. Surely they could pray better in their chapels. Or could they?

No, Sirs; this is just another propaganda stunt, and should not be allowed. Is the Home Secretary going to allow this to go on? The upsetting of traffic, vehicular and pedestrian, for such a useless stunt. If so, then perhaps the Protestants will have a counter-march the same day and place to protest and in reparation for the Government allowing such latitude to Roman Catholic traitors.

Yes, we'd rather have Freethinkers than slave Papists.

We must leave our readers to decide whether this comes from love of free speech or hatred of a rival Christian body.

Mr. G. Whitehead's Summer Tour is drawing to a close. He will address meetings each evening this week, commencing from to-day (September 18), in Bolton, and finish with a week at Plymouth. A large number of meetings have been held during the tour, and the whole of the expenses have been borne by the Executive of the N.S.S.

England's Sabbath

IN Mr. E. Stewart Fay's book *Hanged by a Commune* (Lovat Dickson) will be found quite a number of things of interest to Freethinkers dealing with the law of the land and its various statutes. Mr. Fay illustrates the thesis *Plus ça change plus c'est la même chose*, and he gives some very extraordinary instances of the way in which various legal enactments have persisted to this day though they are, or should be, quite obsolete. And stranger still, we have put on our statute books laws which have their counterpart over 400 years ago. Mr. Fay cites the *Statute of Liveries*, 1503:—

No person shall privately or openly have any livery or sign or retain any person other than such as he giveth household wages unto.

Compare this with the *Public Order Act*, 1936:—

Any person who in any public place or at any public meeting wears a uniform signifying his association with any political organization or with the promotion of any political object shall be guilty of an offence.

There is in the book a most entertaining chapter on the English Sabbath and the laws enacted by Parliament appertaining thereto. It has, of course, been referred to before in these columns, but not many people are aware that, as Mr. Fay points out, "It is one of the ironies of history that the Merry Monarch—that crowned libertine—should have given his name to the measure which clamped the Puritan Sabbath so firmly down upon English life as to endure to this day."

Naturally there had been Sabbatarian enactments before Charles II. There is one under Richard II., forbidding games on Sunday, but this was, comments Mr. Fay, only part of a general anti-game movement "intended to encourage archery rather than devotion." As Puritanism gained in force, however, some intensive preaching began to make itself heard against any games on Sunday, and it was the conduct of the people, under Elizabeth particularly, which came under the Puritans' wrath. "The multitude call it their revelling day," cites Mr. Fay from one preacher, "which day is spent in bull-baitings, bowlings, dieing, carding, dancing, drunkenness, and whoredom." Desperate attempts were made by Parliament and the authorities to put a stop to this sort of thing—at least on Sundays; but whether this was more because the people took a delight in them, than because they were inherently wicked is not conclusively known.

Both James I. and his son Charles I. were pestered to pass Sabbatarian laws; and one which came into force under Charles is still in active operation to-day. Twenty-two men attempted to indulge in some greyhound-racing on a Sunday in 1931, but Sabbatarianism got its revenge, as they were all fined the maximum penalty of 3s. 4d.

But the most famous Sunday Observance Act was passed in 1677, and though it is still with us, it has proved to be, says Mr. Fay, "one of the most widely broken ever to be passed." The reason is simply that it has proved in practice to be very ambiguous, and judges have—except when very religious and intolerant—been loth to administer it in a harsh spirit. In fact, one of them a century ago, Mr. Justice Crompton, contemptuously remarked that the Act is only directed against the lower orders of society." The Act has been often invoked by rigid Sabbatarians, and determined attempts have been made rigorously to enforce it. Indeed, in Hull, for example, it has been a source of revenue to the city for centuries, as there, Sunday traders are—or have been until very recently—severely fined. Many shopkeepers, however, gladly paid the fine, as Sunday is one of their best days.

The special point to remember when dealing with the Sabbath is that there is no Biblical warranty whatever for Sunday as the Sabbath day. The seventh day is Saturday, and that was the day "ordered" by "God" to be kept as a day of rest. It need hardly be said that a day of rest is a very good thing, but only because it is a day of rest, and not because some God ordered it, or because of any religious reason whatever. But religion has stepped in and taken the day under its wing, so to speak, and pious people seem unable to talk rationally about the "holy" day. The Jewish Sabbath became, after the Talmudic Rabbis got it into their clutches, a day of the utmost repression. The things one must not do on it fill pages of their books, the Rabbis holding interminable discussions as to what the "Holy One" meant. It was not so much a Jewish rest day as a Divine one; that is, it was the holiest of the holiest because it was the day on which God himself rested, and it served as a lasting memorial of the great work of Creation.

But as the Israelites were God's own people, it was to them that he gave first the observance of this precious day; it was a sign between God and Israel, because at the time they were his only true worshippers. This is pretty clear from the Bible narrative, but the early Christians rather objected to the observance being exclusively Jewish, and tried to show that the Sabbath was really only held in trust, so to speak, by the Jews, and that when Gentile nations became converted to the true God—that is the Jewish God—they also were allowed

to participate in the blessings of the Sabbath Day. One can read in the writings of the early Church Fathers that they did not at all care for Jewish exclusiveness on the question. For example, Ignatius (116 A.D.) declares:—

Let us, therefore, no longer keep the Sabbath after the Jewish manner, and rejoice in days of idleness . . . but let everyone of you keep the Sabbath after a spiritual manner, rejoicing in meditation on the law, not in relaxation of the body, admiring the workmanship of God, and not eating things prepared the day before . . . and after the observance of the Sabbath, let every friend of Christ keep the Lord's Day as a festival, the resurrection day, the queen and chief of all the days (of the week).

From this will be seen that Ignatius (or whoever the writer of the Epistle was, for it is probably a pious forgery) had not yet gone over to those Christians who were bent on making "the resurrection day" the Sabbath. It was Justin Martyr, about 140 A.D., who first gives an account of the early Christians meeting on Sunday for prayers and thanksgiving, though for him the Sabbath was merely a Jewish institution unknown before Moses, and of no authority since the death of Christ. Justin, in fact, does not seem particularly impressed with the holiness of the Sabbath Day, and considered nothing more was needed if one had "Jesus Christ the Son of God."

As a matter of fact the early Church Fathers, taken as a body, were wont to distinguish between the two days, the Sabbath, and the Lord's Day and, as far as Christianity went, it was the Lord's Day which won. The real reason was undoubtedly that the worship of the Sun on Sunday was far too strong to be abolished by the pagan converts and their teachers to the new religion; and in the battle for Sabbatarian supremacy the pagans conquered.

We, therefore, have the beautiful spectacle of the most fervent believer in the Bible, he who looks upon it as literally God's work, the average Protestant evangelist, throwing over God's divine command with respect to the Sabbath, refusing to keep the seventh day "holy," and transferring his devotion to the first day of the week just because the early Roman Catholics were unable to abolish the day of the Sun. And it is these same people who are inflicting now, and would like to inflict for ever on to the people of this and other countries, the ghastly and miserable day which is rightly distinguished as the Christian Sabbath—a day of horror if ever there was one. The amount of real misery it caused when it was almost compulsory can hardly be computed.

The real irony of it all is, as Mr. Fay points out, that the statute under which many of the Sabbath's worst features were made compulsory was passed under Charles II.—a king who owed most of his popularity to the fact that he was the very antithesis of the Puritan. Charles probably broke every moral law, and there seems no record of his ever spending a Sabbath day really "holy." But this Act was a fine sop to his Puritan subjects.

It ought to be one of the principal tasks of Free-thinkers to abolish the "Sabbath" once for all. It should be a day of rest, but that rest should be one of joy and happiness.

H. CUTNER.

Two sectarians were once disputing so loudly on the subject of religion that they awoke a big dog which had been sleeping on the hearth before them, and he forthwith barked most furiously. An old sceptic present who had been quietly sipping his tea while the disputants were talking, exclaimed: "Hold your tongue, you silly brute! You know no more about it than they do."

Is there Life on other Planets?

UNDER the above heading, a series of articles by Dr. H. Spencer Jones, Astronomer Royal, has been appearing in *Armchair Science*. The question to be discussed is introduced by a brief description of our Solar System, at the end of which it is asked:—

Are we to suppose that our earth is the only planet on which life of any sort is to be found?

Apparently the author does not intend us to suppose so, for he continues:—

The sun is a member of a very large system of stars, shaped much like a thin pocket watch, so vast in extent that it takes light more than one hundred thousand years to travel from one end of it to the other. In this system alone there are something like one hundred thousand million stars. . . . But that is not all. This vast system is merely one amongst millions of more or less similar systems in the region of space that we can probe with our telescopes. Still farther away, how many more systems may there not be, never yet seen by mortal eye, nor even recorded on the photographic plate? Such, in brief, is the picture of the Universe that is revealed by modern astronomical observation.

Can it be that throughout the vast deeps of space nowhere but on our own little earth is life to be found? Most people, I think, would find it difficult to believe that this can be so. The mind rebels against this seeming waste of creation.

These remarks may be true when applied to those who, like Dr. Spencer Jones, still cling to the anthropocentric theory of the Universe: but if the facts are against the theory, so much worse for the theory. So long as human standards are not utilized as measures of cosmic processes, the mind need not rebel against this seeming waste of creation. When the question is examined impartially, and without preconceptions, we are inevitably led to the conclusion that life is but an infinitesimal part of the universal whole. If the vast deeps of space are waste, merely on account of the absence of life, then this earth was waste long before life appeared in its most primitive form. On the same reasoning it will be waste when life is no more. The truth is that the term "waste" is meaningless when applied to nature. Nature is no more concerned with life than it is with any other of its multitudinous phenomena.

Dr. Spencer Jones then proceeds to examine the evidence for the existence of life in other portions of space. He says:

I think it probable that certain essential conditions are necessary before life of any sort can exist.

Such is science as served up for popular consumption. Comment on this would be superfluous. Sufficient it is to remark in passing that Dr. Spencer Jones apparently thinks that life may possibly exist apart from its conditions. After a search for these conditions he tells us that we can at once rule out of consideration all the stars, and that our search for life in the Universe must be restricted to the cooler planetary bodies. The search is still further narrowed down by an examination of conditions obtaining on the moon and the planet Mercury, from which it is inferred that we may be quite certain that there is no life of any kind thereon. The satellites of Jupiter and Saturn, the asteroids or minor planets, moving round the sun between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter, are next examined, with a similar result. Then come Pluto, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune. Still no evidence. So far, the search for extra-mundane life has been unsuccessful. There remain two further planets to examine: Venus, and Mars. With regard to

Venus it is pointed out that the temperature conditions are certainly not such as to make life impossible. The atmosphere, however, differs from our own in presenting a great abundance of carbon-dioxide, and a great scarcity of oxygen, from which it is inferred that any life on Venus can be at the most primitive plant life, representing conditions similar to those that the earth passed through millions of years ago. Last comes Mars, the happy hunting-ground of the pseudo-scientist and the sensational press. After consideration of the physical factors Dr. Spencer Jones is led to the conclusion that Mars

appears to be a world in the sere and yellow leaf, where life may have flourished in ages long past, but where conditions now seem to be such that, though plant life continues to exist, highly developed types of animal life are unlikely to be found.

The limitation to the examination of the cooler planetary bodies with which Dr. Spencer Jones set out has now been reached. No evidence for even the possibility of the existence of life of any kind has been found, except it may be for plant life on Mars and Venus. Even this possibility is based solely on an examination of temperature and atmospheric conditions, but there are many other factors to be taken into account in a consideration of the phenomena of life, and that even plant life exists on Mars and Venus is a mere assumption.

Dr. Spencer Jones is evidently disappointed in his fruitless quest, and after informing us that the search for life *must* be restricted to the cooler planetary bodies of our own system he proceeds:—

So far, this survey of mine has dealt only with the family of our sun, which is merely an average star, one amongst the many stars, numbering some two hundred thousand millions or so, in our stellar universe. And that universe in turn is merely one amongst many millions of more or less similar island universes scattered through space. What is the chance that life exists on some of the planets belonging to one or other of these innumerable stars in our own, or some other universe? This is a difficult question to answer, because if such planetary systems exist, they are beyond our range of vision.

Difficult indeed, and one that cannot be answered. Modern astronomy informs us that other planetary systems, even if such exist, must be the exception rather than the rule. Even in any planetary system that may be imagined Dr. Spencer Jones is forced to the admission that everything seems to be weighted against the possibility of the existence of life, but in spite of all the adverse evidence he has himself ad-duced, he still persists in his belief that life exists elsewhere in the Universe, though he is careful to add that it is the exception rather than the rule.

The series of articles concludes as follows:—

Does it follow that our earth is unique, the only home of life in the Cosmos as a whole—the universe of universes? I cannot think that this can be so. . . .

If we hold, as I think we must, that, where conditions are suitable for life, life will somehow develop, it follows that life must exist on many other worlds. It may not be life such as we are familiar with: probably, as a result of some slight difference in conditions, entirely different forms of life will develop though there may well be intelligent life.

But our little earth is not, I think, unique; in my opinion the whole purpose of creation has not been centred on this one small world.

Every phenomenon is the synthesis of its conditions, and where all the conditions suitable for life exist, life will not somehow develop: it is already there.

The final paragraph is an opinion, and an opinion only. There is not a shred of evidence in its support. Throughout the discussion the references have been

to life in the abstract. I do not think that those who posit purpose in the Universe would rest content even with a multitude of worlds containing nothing higher than simple plant and animal life. But once the existence of even the most elementary form of life is assumed, it is then innocently imagined that the way is paved for man or some analogous creature. Because life has developed in this world from simple Protozoa to complex humanity, there is no reason to suppose that it has developed or will develop on identical lines in another world. Nature is not under the necessity of putting all her models in the same moulds, and when we consider the multifarious conditions which have operated in the production of the various forms of life which are known to us, to expect to find these same forms repeated under entirely different conditions is infinitely more unreasonable than to expect to find the same pattern every time we look into a kaleidoscope.

Let us imagine this earth prior to the existence thereof of life in any form, in the throes of a mighty labour, torn by volcanic action, and agitated by internal convulsions: gradually cooling down: the plastic masses becoming solidified, forming mountains and valleys: the vapours condensing and forming the rivers and oceans: and at last the arrival at a stage compatible with the appearance of life in its most primitive forms. Similar phenomena may have occurred on other planets, but the probability that the resulting physical features would have been identical is extremely remote. There would almost certainly be a disproportion in the quantities of land and water, and also a difference in their distribution, and a consequent variation of the general physical phenomena arising in each case. Any life existing on other planets would therefore at its very commencement be brought into relation with a different environment to that encountered by incipient life on this planet, and when we consider the important part which environment has played in the evolution and development of life, it is reasonable to infer that this factor alone would, as evolution proceeded, lead to divergencies which would gradually become more and more pronounced. All the other factors which enter into the evolutionary process would be responsible for further complications, and as our imagination is limited to the forms of life with which mundane experience has made us familiar, we can have no conception of any forms of life which may have been evolved on other planets, and there is nothing to justify the assumption that any creature analogous to man has arisen there.

To the adherents of the anthropocentric theory of the Universe I quote from Sir James Jeans:—

It seems incredible that the universe can have been designed primarily to produce life like our own; had it been so, surely we might have expected to find a better proportion between the magnitude of the mechanism and the amount of the product. At first glance at least, life seems to be an utterly unimportant by-product. (*The Mysterious Universe*, p. 5.)

and so long as the investigation is pursued on the strictly scientific method, it remains a by-product to the end.

F. KENVON.

Others, I doubt not, if not we,
The issue of our toils shall see;
Young children gather as their own
The harvest that the dead had sown,
The dead forgotten and unknown.

A. H. Clough.

Who Are the Christians?

AMONG the ancient Greeks it was customary to put to death messengers who brought news of a disaster to the State. Such a frame of mind is not unknown in the present time. I recently heard a Christian speaker say that it would have been better if Darwin and Huxley had never been born.

He said the vile doctrine of the "survival of the fittest" was responsible for all the evils of our present day competitive society. To condemn Darwin and Huxley on such grounds is absurd. They did not invent the doctrine; they only showed it to exist. This is an example of the danger of disliking persons because we dislike their opinions.

Besides, one would think from that that no war had been fought prior to the nineteenth century, that there had never existed such things as slavery, tyranny and oppression. Such gems of historical insight are only possible to those blinded by the spiritual glare of the newly-converted.

The same speaker complained that the Secularist dealt with the Christianity of the Victorian times only; he did not deal with the teaching of "Modernism" at all.

This is not strictly true. The Secularist does not give the same time and care to the Modernist position as he does to the Fundamentalist, because the Modernist has come, in so many respects, to the same position as the Secularist of Victorian times. He does not believe in a personal God, he has accepted evolution, and has agreed that a great deal of the Bible is untrue or, as he puts it, is "not to be taken literally."

As for the doctrine of personal immortality, there is less talk of that than ever. The Modernist believes in it, but wisely, has not dwelt too much on the details of such a belief. We shall all live on, somewhere, some place, somehow, and he has discarded the entrance test and the two classes of accommodation. Everyone will be admitted, and there will be no first and second class decks. The Modernist believes this just as he believes the fall of Man is true—metaphorically.

Modernists imagine themselves to be in the vanguard of progress when they are really in the rear. They are in front of the Fundamentalists. Many Modernists would leave the church if they were not hypnotised by the name Christian.

The Fundamentalists are as much a reaction to Secularism as are the Modernists. The Modernist cannot advance without destroying himself by losing his Christianity. The Fundamentalist cannot retreat without making his creed untenable.

While the Modernist swings one way and the Fundamentalist the other, the Secularist steps in between and forges ahead. Both Modernism and Fundamentalism are becoming unacceptable to the great majority. Modernism is becoming too thin and Fundamentalism too thick.

There is a split in the Modernist group between what we call the "Intellectual Modernists" and the "Christian Socialists." The chief representative of "Intellectual Modernism" is Dean Inge. Christian Socialism teaches that the teachings of Christ are synonymous with Socialism. It was founded by Charles Kingsley and Thomas Hughes, and was really an antidote to the intellectual disintegration caused by nineteenth century science. Kingsley talked about how we wanted less thought and more faith. He also founded that branch of English Christianity known as "Muscular Christianity."

He started those hearty curates who converted you by blacking your eye in a friendly bout with the gloves, and then in a hearty man-to-man talk discussed the evils of sex. No one ever thought of discussing the virtues of sex

Now Jesus Christ has become a complete Socialist. It has been said that the two greatest Jews in history were Jesus Christ and Karl Marx. It is absurd to credit Jesus with ideas that could only have arisen in a later age. How on earth could a person living in Palestine two thousand years ago envisage the complex social and economic machinery of the twentieth century? And no one can deny that his teachings were other-worldly. Jesus hardly ever discussed the affairs of this world except in their relation to the next. To place him in juxtaposition with Karl Marx is to illuminate neither. Both—if Jesus ever lived—were the sons of their ages and times.

Who then are the Christians? The Fundamentalist with his belief in the truth of the Bible from cover to cover? The Modernist with his airy nothings and subtle half-beliefs? The Christian Socialist with his political doctrines translated into religious jargon?

I am not forgetting the orthodox churches. The Catholic Church is still a living force and the Protestants (both conforming and nonconforming) exist. This gives a bewildering body of beliefs and dogmas; enough to suit anyone. The bitterness of division is ceasing to have practical repercussions. Except in some queer backwoods like certain parts of Ireland and Scotland, differences of opinions are not held with the same warmth as formerly. This is a sign of the times. The questions that at one time rocked continents and provoked nations to war, civil and uncivil, have now lost much of their power over the human mind. Some men believe in a God, but they don't argue about it with battle-axes; some in personal immortality, but they don't butcher their neighbours to make heaven safe for Catholics or Protestants. This is a state of affairs that will not be regretted by any except priests, and they dare not confess it. And if it were not for the fanatics in every sect, Christianity would be a united body by this time—a sign of its impotence and that its power to make history has passed.

IDRIS LL. ABRAHAM.

Correspondence

SERVICE IN THE CAUSE

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER"

SIR,—As you have said, there is perhaps nothing meritorious in attaining the age of 70 years, and as a very old man who years ago left that age behind him, I am bound to agree; but in *your* arriving at that age, it does give many admirers an opportunity of offering you their good wishes for your future, and also of thanking you for your magnificent work on behalf of Freethought in England, and which no doubt has been appreciated by multitudes of readers across the seas.

I have been a reader of the *Freethinker* since its first appearance in 1881; and before that I regularly read the *National Reformer* and the *Secular Review*. Only old readers of the *Freethinker* are in a position to recognize—looking back through the years—the vast strides that have been made to break down the creeds that have done so much to enslave the minds and retard the intellectual progress of mankind, and much of this is due to your great efforts and your predecessor (G. W. Foote, whom I remember as a very young lecturer).

I expect there are but few alive to-day who heard the great five days' debate between Mr. Bradlaugh and the Rev. R. Roberts, in Birmingham; and which marked the time of my freedom from the teachings of Christianity.

I fervently hope you will have strength for many years to help on the cause you have at heart, and I thank you for all you have done in the past.

CHAS. DRYLAND.

WITH THE SPIRITS.

SIR,—I went to a Spiritualist service last Sunday, and was much struck by the strong vein of anti-Christianity.

Usually the Spiritualists are polite to Christianity, and when the Chairman began to read a chapter from the Bible, I expected a harmless chapter. But, after reading out the sixth commandment, he proceeded to read out Numbers xxxi. one of the most revolting chapters in the Bible, about the wholesale murders of the Midianites. Then he read out a written message from spirit called Silver Birch, and Silver Birch warned us to trust our consciences, not a book or a church. Then came a hymn beginning:—

O you who dare not trust your soul,
To guide you on your heavenly way.
But shrink from its divine control,
Crude superstition to obey.

Of course you consider Spiritualism as crude as Christianity intellectually, but I think you must admit that morally it is a great advance.

I must add that later, when the clairvoyante began to see spooks around us, I could not recognize her descriptions of any of those she saw round me. "More folks know Tom Fool than Tom Fool knows," is apparently as true of spooks as of humans in this life.

C. HARPUR.

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

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1) : 11.0, Laurence Housman—"Extremists."
BETHNAL GREEN AND HACKNEY BRANCH N.S.S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand) : 3.15, Mr. W. B. Collins.
KINGSTON-ON-THAMES BRANCH N.S.S. (Market Place) : 7.30, Mr. R. H. Rosetti.
NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Highbury Corner) : 8.0, Friday, G. Attfield. White Stone Pond, 11.30, Sunday, G. Attfield. Parliament Hill Fields, 3.0, Sunday, G. Attfield. South Hill Park, 8.0, Monday, L. Ebury.
SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Brockwell Park) : 7.0, Sunday, Mr. F. P. Corrigan.
WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park) : 3.40, Sunday, Miss E. Millard, M.A., Messrs. E. Bryant and G. Barnes. 6.30, Messrs. Bryant, Barnes and Tuson. Wednesday, 7.30, Mr. W. B. Collins. Thursday, 7.30, Mrs. N. Baxton. Friday, 7.30, Mr. G. Barnes.

COUNTRY

OUTDOOR

IRKENHEAD BRANCH N.S.S. (Haymarket) : 8.0, Saturday, Mr. D. Robinson—A Lecture.
BLYTH (The Market) : 7.0, Monday, Mr. J. T. Brighton.
BOLTON BRANCH N.S.S. (Bolton Town Hall Steps) : 7.30, Saturday, Sunday, Monday, Thursday and Friday. Chorley Market, 7.30, Tuesday and Wednesday. Mr. G. Whitehead will speak at these places.
EDINBURGH BRANCH N.S.S. (Mound) : 7.0, Mr. F. Smithies—"The Godless Conference."
GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY (Albert Road) : 8.0, Tuesday, Minard Road, 8.0, Thursday. Albion Street, 8.0, Friday. Mrs. M. I. Whitefield will speak at these places. Albion Street, 8.0, Sunday, T. L. Smith.
GREENOCK BRANCH N.S.S. (Grey Place) : 8.0, Wednesday, Mrs. M. I. Whitefield.
LIVERPOOL BRANCH N.S.S. (Corner of High Park Street and Park Road) : 8.0, Tuesday, Messrs. Robinson and Kenny. Queen's Drive, opposite Walton Baths, 8.0, Sunday, Mr. Ashby or Mr. Parry and Mr. Kenny. Garston Terminus, 8.0, Wednesday, Messrs. Thompson and Kenny.
NORTH WEST FEDERATION OF N.S.S. BRANCHES (Vee Cross Café, 3 Victoria Street, Blackburn) : 2.0, A Conference. Market Square, 7.0, A Demonstration. If wet, in the Vee Cross Café.
MANCHESTER BRANCH N.S.S. (Eccles Market) : 8.0, Friday-Bury Market, 8.0, Saturday. Ashton Market, 8.0, Sunday. Blackburn Market, 8.0, Monday. Mr. W. A. Atkinson will speak at these meetings. Stevenson Square, 7.30, Sunday, A Lecture.

(Continued on p. 607)

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