

THE FREETHINKER

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PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

	Page
On Tower Hill—The Editor	129
The Passing of a Pope—Mimmermus	131
The Scene of the World's Great Volcanic Outburst— T. F. Palmer	132
Can Mind be Explained?—G. H. Taylor	133
Aimee at Los Angeles—James Cairn	134
Enoch and Jude—C. Clayton Dove	138
Flashbacks on Tyneside—T. H. Elstob	139
Pragmatism and Materialism—J. W. Porter	141

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

Views and Opinions

On Tower Hill

TOWER HILL is one of the open spaces in London in which for many years all sorts of people have gone to preach all sorts of doctrines, with, one may suppose, all sorts of results. Among these speakers is a certain clerical gentleman, the Rev. Donald Soper, whose special job has been to reply (we fancy Mr. Soper is not quite clear as to the difference between a reply and an answer) to all sorts of objections to the Christian religion. Mr. Soper has, we believe, published a book dealing with these questions and answers, which we have not read, and, in present circumstances, judging from reports of his replies to questioners that we have seen, we have no intention of reading. There is a certain amount of rubbish that I must read week after week, but I refrain from increasing the weekly dose. But for some months Mr. Soper has been unwell, and Tower Hill has been without his eloquence and his logic. Recently he resumed his visits, and reports that he found a change in the audience—or himself. After some consideration he decides that the change is probably in himself, which is another way of saying that his efforts at converting infidels have not resulted in anything spectacular. And the change in himself is, he says, in the direction of evangelism—which means (we speak under correction)—that in the future he will argue less and preach more. We think he is well advised. Arguing with a Freethinker invariably leaves the Freethinker where he was, and not infrequently leads some of the Christian listeners to take an interest in Freethought.

That, indeed is a very old discovery. It goes back at least, to the time of Lucian. In his sketch of the gods listening to a discussion between an Atheist and a believer in the streets of Athens, there is a point at which the believer gets piously abusive, and Zeus exclaims to the other gods:—

Our man is doing well. He has the rudest manner and the loudest voice. Well done! give him hard

words. That is your strong point. Begin to reason and you will be as dumb as a fish.

Theologically, that advice is as sound as ever. And the practice is as common as ever. Change of circumstances has caused the godite to adopt a more courteous form of expression, but the substance remains as it was. The average preacher no longer paints the unbeliever as individually bad, but he stresses two things. First, that morality has no authority if there is not a God, and, second, that the individual unbeliever may be a very decent individual, but that is because he inherits a fundamentally Christian environment which guards him against the demoralizing consequences of his own convictions. The unbeliever, as he normally exists, does not beat his wife, starve his children, cheat his customers, or fall short in his public duties, but he *would*, if he logically acted up to the disbelief in religion which he avows. So it is very obligingly explained that the Freethinker *may* be as good as a Christian, a compliment which reminds one of the man who defended a friend against the accusation that he was not fit to clean another person's boots by affirming emphatically that he was. I think that Mr. Soper is well advised to drop the argument and stick to sheer preaching. That will please the believer, and will keep the unbeliever at a distance.

* * *

A Reserved Occupation

But the statement that impressed me in the Rev. Donald's confession was that the Christian Church is "a distinctly reserved occupation." As a question of alleged actuality—religious actuality—I suppose this is true. Every clergyman believes that he is called to his job, and as he also believes that the world manifests God's "plan," it may safely be deduced that God arranged matters so that at a certain time there would be a vacancy in the Church, and also planned that A. or B. should be there to fill it. In the Church of England service the candidate for the parsonry is asked at the ordination service whether he is moved by the Holy Ghost to become a clergyman, and he unhesitatingly says he is. I offer no comment as to whether he is speaking the truth in this matter; I think it is one of those things that one must believe without evidence, and the situation may be that part of the plan that is created in order to test our faith. Personally, when I look at the clergy, Established and Nonconformist, it seems to be what the New Testament calls a "hard saying"—or, as the man in the street would say, it takes some swallowing. From an unspiritual point of view it looks like a libel on the judgment of God. Yet I admit that it might explain things. I remember being called on one day by a rather amiable type of stupid parson who talked on a variety of things, and in the end hoped that we would not think the worse of each other because of our difference of opinion. I assured him that I bore him not

the slightest ill-will, and added, "In fact, if I believed in a God I should say that he intended you to be a clergyman." He looked a trifle puzzled, but I left him to work it out whether I was offering him an insult or a compliment.

At the time of writing, the Roman College of Cardinals is busy with the task of selecting a new Pope. At least that is what it looks like to people like myself. But everyone who understands will tell you that this is a mere form. The gathering of the Cardinals, the intrigues, the considerations whether A. or B., as an important foreign power, would welcome C. or D. are powerful factors in the discussion. Mussolini would not be pleased with a Pope whose sympathies ran in the direction of Communism (The Roman Church has no objection to Communism if it is divorced from Atheism, as it might be) and Hitler would not welcome a converted Jew; who also is *prima facie* eligible for the Papacy. But the Pope is officially selected by the Holy Ghost, and whenever, after election, he speaks on doctrine, it is as the mouth-piece of that shadowy authority. So I think that on the face of it Mr. Soper is right when he says that the Church is a distinctly reserved occupation. God reserved certain men to preach to the people. Not to argue with them. And I think this is further proven—from the religious point of view—by the fact that whenever a parson argues with a competent unbeliever the Lord leaves him to himself—with disastrous consequences to himself. But whenever the parson argues *about* an unbeliever, either through a B.B.C. microphone or from a pulpit, the unbeliever is reduced to complete insignificance.

* * *

A Very RESERVED Occupation

The more I look at that phrase, "a distinctly reserved occupation," the more I like it. I find it full of significance, one of those stimulating expressions that open up suggestions right and left. For example, during the war of 1914-18, the Government divided the population into three groups—men, women and clergymen. All able-bodied men were, *ipso facto*, in the army, and were liable to be called up for service. The distinctly reserved part of the population consisted of men physically unfit to serve, women, children, insane adults, and clergymen. The celebrated division of the population made by Sydney Smith (Dean of St. Paul's) into men, women and clergymen, was for the first time in history adopted by Act of Parliament. It would have been a reflection on the wisdom of God if, after he had selected from the millions of Englishmen certain men to serve him, Parliament had thrown them into the trenches.

That term "reserved" attracts me. It is so suggestive, and so wide in its application. For example. Long ago the Churches declared that the Holy Bible was written by "Him that sitteth upon the throne." But for several generations most educated and intelligent (one must not confuse education with intelligence) men and women have been aware that this is simply not true. The Bible came into existence precisely as other books have come into existence; and as it was written a long time ago intelligent people are not surprised to learn that its history is more imaginative than factual, its morals tribal and primitive, its science altogether wrong, and its philosophy of life, as a consequence, just what one would expect. In ordinary cases the errors made might have been frankly and openly acknowledged, and the place of the "sacred" book abolished. But the priesthood is a reserved occupation, and in no direction has the clergy shown greater reserve than in the handling of truth when it affected their position. They still keep the Bible in the schools and in the courts. They pre-

sent it to children as though the old view had never been questioned. They keep it in the courts as though the belief that God would punish those who gave false evidence is believed in as it was in the Dark Ages. And in their sermons they refer to what Joshua did, or what Moses did, or when "our Lord" did this or that, as though no question as to the accuracy of the Bible legends had ever been raised. As secular controversialists the clergy may admit much, but as clergymen they are impressed by the fact that theirs is a reserved occupation, and they reserve the truth for use on such occasions as it cannot be dispensed with.

Again, a long time ago, the Churches secured by hook or by crook (it may be noted in passing that the official walking-stick of a Bishop is shaped like a crook and may be used as a hook) large endowments in land and in cash. Part of this was given them on the understanding that some of it should be returned to the poor, and the rest be retained as payment for saving men's souls. But to-day, the money is not given away to the poor, the business of saving souls has so shrunk that a very large section of the population is doubtful if people have any souls to save, while another large section definitely disbelieves it. But the parsonry is a reserved profession, with instincts that will reserve all it can, and the one certain thing is that the clergy, Conformist and Nonconformist, will reserve just as much of their endowments, and the right to dodge the payment of taxes, etc., so long as it is possible to do so. The instinct of the clergy to reserve is very strong indeed.

There is no mistake about the Church—all Churches—being a reserved profession. The profession of a clergyman is full of reservations. He is reserved in telling the truth about his own creed, and the truth about the creeds of others. He is reserved in telling his congregation the truth about religion. The clergy as a body have shown almost complete reserve in explaining that the tales told about unbelievers are to-day exposed lies. Bishop Barnes once explained that he had held what many of his brother ministers called heretical ideas long before he expressed them publicly. But he reserved the truth until he felt that it could safely be told. The clergyman of to-day is holding a reserved position in order that he may preserve his position, his emoluments and the support of those who are less acquainted with the facts than he is.

I congratulate Mr. Soper on his discovery. Christianity is indeed a reserved occupation. The life of its advocates is one long example of reservation concerning things about which reserve should not exist.

CHAPMAN COHEN

War

We are those potential dead for whom the future mourns;
For whom our fathers' corpses stir within their narrow
bournes
In raging hate to know that they have died that we may
live
To die as they themselves have died . . . so that our sons
may live
To die as we ourselves shall die, to eat their bread with
blood,
Bread stained with tears of widows, orphaned children
. . . ere that should
Have come to pass . . . Rise up, ye strong and great
potential dead!
Your brain and brawn can end this farce long ere your
blood be shed!

H. DRAKE

The Passing of a Pope

It is a lie—their priests, their pope,
Their saints, their—, all they fear or hope
Are lies and lies.—*Browning.*

THE death of a Pope and the election of his successor by the Cardinals must always be a matter of considerable interest to Freethinkers. For the Roman Pontiff is the Christian ecclesiastic who addresses the largest congregation in the world. Compared with this Papal dignity all other Archbishops and Patriarchs seem as parochial as the rector of Little Pedlington. Using the abracadabra of his profession, a Pope utters words which are heard from Bolivia to Bermondsey, from Stockholm to the South Seas. The rhetoric may be enfeebled and the platitudes exhausted, but the Papal Patriarch possesses something of the character of the legendary Wandering Jew. The figure remains, others pass. His unique position with regard to the huge multitudes of men and women who hold their rule of faith from the largest of the Christian Churches is striking, and nothing was more remarkable than the Pope's attitude during the lamentable days of the Great War. Unlike the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Bishop of London, he never made the silly mistake of including national flags and machine-guns among the most sacred emblems of an alleged "Religion of Love," and he again and yet again deplored the truly awful waste of life among Christian peoples. That his warning was treated with utter contempt by Christians themselves was not his fault, and the Pontiff was spared nothing that the energy of the militarist parties and the hypocritical indifference of the religious world could make him suffer. Publicly he stood, the King Lear of thankless and ungrateful children, a little shrill in his menaces, but keeping untarnished the dignity of a paternity rejected.

The events of the Great War, and the post-war period, show very clearly the ebb-tide of the temporal power of the Papacy itself, and form the bitterest commentary on the proud boast of the Romish Hierarchy, "Semper Idem" (always the same). For two generations the Popes have sought untiringly for the restoration of the Papal temporal power. To this end, the "Bride of Christ" has flirted with Republicanism, with Socialism, and with Nazidom. The scheming has all proved futile, and the dream is ended. The irresistible might of the Papacy, which once unseated Kings, and could send the Crusaders scurrying across Europe in rusty armour to dispossess the infidel, has crumbled and degenerated into a kingdom of Lilliput, with its tiny representation of the Papal magnificence of the Middle Ages. What was once an army is now a corporal's guard; what was once the Oracle of Europe is now an old gentleman reciting in a dead language the requiem of a dying creed.

How are the mighty fallen! The paralysis of the great and powerful Catholic Church has been so slow, but sure process. There was a time when she commanded obedience, if not respect. She once had her intellectual wing, her scholars, her statesmen, her thinkers, who found her borrowed mummeries and stolen creeds susceptible of mystical interpretation. Hundreds of European cities shimmered with the fair architecture of her churches. From thousands of canvasses the fancied glories of her saints were displayed. From tens of thousands of flagreed pulpits "the old old story" was repeated. Still she declined, and went to her appointed fate. The ignorant, bigoted, evangelical party prevailed gradually over these, and exterminated them by fire and sword, rack and gibbet, leaving themselves more ignorant and more bigoted than before. By slow and sure degrees

the whole Catholic Church was made over to their leprous likeness, and her doom was said.

It required centuries, not years, to produce this dire result. The very triumphs of Freethought throughout Europe indirectly contributed to this end. Every Catholic who became a Freethinker assisted this process. It could not be otherwise. The more brains that were drawn out of this Romish Church the more did the huge mass part with its intellectual leaven, and tend to flatten down to a mere mass of intolerance and superstition. What actually constitutes the real obstructive character of this Medieval Church is the deep abyss which now separates her from the highest intelligence around her; the live, alert brains of science, and the leaden, moveless stereotype of medieval dogma. To-day the voice of the Roman Pontiff, at which Kings once trembled, attracts as little attention as "the horns of Elfland faintly blowing."

It is, indeed, the twilight of the gods. As belief has waned in England, the Anglican Church has sought more and more to imitate the methods of Rome. The Anglo-Catholics have taken part possession of the State Church. Maybe they have not done all that was dreaded by timid Free Church Protestants, but they rule the ecclesiastical roost, and Archbishops and Bishops are powerless. At the present hour there are covered by the umbrella of the English State Church men who hold the extremist doctrine of the freedom of the individual, and creatures who are willing to submit to the utmost doctrine of priestly control. How long will this battle between Romanists and Evangelicals last? That a large and increasing number of the Anglican clergy were coquetting with Romanists caused, some years ago, attention in the Catholic Church, and the then Pope had some idea of reconverting England, and of reimposing the yoke which our ancestors threw off. But even popes cannot force the clock back in this summary fashion, and the English people still, as a nation, refuse to acknowledge Papal supremacy, and bear with the lesser evil of the Government form of religion.

The truth is that the English people are as conservative as the Chinese, and also as worldly. They will bow to authority, but will not allow that authority to push them too far. In darkened and superstitious times the power of the Catholic Church was great, but it finished in this country with the glare of the fires at Smithfield and Stratford. It was never at any time so unquestioned and so unresisted as in Italy, Spain, and France. We had no St. Bartholomew massacre, and the Star Chamber was but a miniature Inquisition, and brought its own nemesis. There is a wholesome obstinacy in English blood, which is cooler than that of the Latin races. It shows itself whenever the whip is cracked too loudly, as Charles I. and James II. knew to their cost, and as the long battle for the freedom of speech also proves. Priestcraft can never do its worst in England, for it never had a safe seat on British shoulders, even in the Ages of Faith and Ignorance. It is an impossible dream now that there is an organized national Freethought Party, which is largely instrumental in creating the architecture of a new social order.

MIMNERMUS

Adversity tries us, but does not nourish us. Too much of it tries us in the worst sense of the word. It turns us pale and grey. And there is suffering which positively degrades; suffering which paralyses all the springs of life, and flings men and women into the abyss, from which no spiral road, however long and steep and arduous, ever leads again to the light and warmth of day,

G. W. Foote.

The Scene of the World's great Volcanic Outburst

SUMATRA, a far Eastern Dutch possession, is one of the largest islands in the world. Its area is approximately 162,000 square miles, and an imposing array of eminencies—the Bukit Barisan or Chain Mountains, comprising several practically parallel ranges varying from 7,000 to 12,000 feet in altitude, constitute the framework of Sumatra. Many of these mountains are volcanic. The island at its southern extremity is separated from Java by the Sunda Straits, where the memorable eruption of Krakatau occurred in 1883.

The adjoining island of Java is densely populated and has long been brought within the range of civilization, but Sumatra partly remains a desolate and largely uncharted region. A limited area only has been influenced by Dutch civilization, and the temple and other architectural ruins of an earlier Hindu settlement, which in Java are so numerous and striking, are relatively crude and unimpressive in Sumatra.

Marco Polo was the pioneer who first made the island known to Europe in 1291, and more than two centuries elapsed before another European appears to have reached it. Then the Portuguese Sequeira, whose officers included the great Magellan, arrived in 1509 and concluded a treaty with the raja. Hitherto, the commerce of the country had been conducted by the Arabs, at least since the supersession of the earlier Indian traders. For prior to Marco Polo's visit, the Moslem influence and faith had been established on the eastern coasts.

The Netherlanders made their first appearance in 1598, and in 1685, the British merchants erected a factory at Benkulen. But in 1824 this settlement was transferred to the Dutch in exchange for Malacca.

The flora of Sumatra is remarkably rich and varied, and the island produces the largest flowers in the world, while its forest trees are of great commercial value. The Orang-utan and the primate known to the Malays as the *bru* and to the Dutch as *Master Kees*, which are used by the natives to gather coconuts, are two only of the numerous apes and monkeys resident in the island. The elephant, tiger, rhinoceros, python and many other animals, including an immense array of bird life, add to the interest of the country.

The human inhabitants are of Malayan stock. The Achenese in the north embraced the Moslem religion more than 700 years ago. At the south of Ache lies the extensive territory of the Battaks, a Pagan people of cannibal character, whose victims were usually criminals, slaves, or war prisoners. Those Battaks who have adopted civilized customs assert that cannibal practices have long since ceased to be, but it is suspected that the custom still lingers in the wilder and little-explored island interior. It is probable that the Battaks will ultimately become Moslem in faith, for the Christian missionaries have met with very little encouragement. The most advanced Malay tribes are the cultivators of the hilly region above Padang, who, although Mohammedan, have retained the matriarchal system of marriage. Speaking of their habitat, Sir Stamford Raffles says: "As far as the eye could reach was one continued scene of cultivation, interspersed with towns and villages shaded by palms and fruit trees. I may safely say that the view equalled anything I saw in Java."

The craters of many of the quiescent or extinct volcanoes are occupied by splendid mountain lakes and Toba, one of these sheets of water, is 45 miles long and 15 miles broad. Merapi is a very active volcano, and is locally termed the Fire Destroyer, while the Malays

connect it with their legend of the Flood and Ararat.

Dempo is a destructive volcano which discharges "sulphur rain," that at given intervals ruins the crops of the adjoining districts. Its immense crater contains a mass of liquid mud at times converted into a gigantic geyser. Forbes witnessed the eruption after the sediment had become engulfed when "a dull sullen roar was heard . . . when the whole lake rose and heaved in the air for some hundreds of feet, not as, if violently ejected, but with calm majestic upheaval, and then fell back on itself with an awesome roar, which reverberated round the vast caldron, and echoed from rocky wall to rocky wall like the surge of an angry sea; and the immense volume of steam let loose from its prison-house dissipated itself into the air. The wave circles died away on the margin of the lake . . . and silence reigned again until the geyser had gathered force for another expiration. Thus all day long the lake was swallowed up and vomited forth once in every fifteen or twenty minutes."

The most turbulent volcanic catastrophe ever recorded was that at Krakatau in the Sunda Straits. Other eruptions have produced greater darkness and ejected larger amounts of material. But in the abruptness and intensity of its explosions, and the disastrous consequences of the seismic wave it occasioned, it stands supreme. In this tremendous upheaval the huge volcano was completely shattered, and according to Dr. Guillemard, "a mass of matter of not less than $1\frac{1}{8}$ cubic mile in size, was blown into the air in the course of a few hours, and nearly 40,000 people perished."

The only eruption previously recorded was that of 1680, which is said to have destroyed all the forests in the adjacent islands. And, it was on a May morning, in 1883, that the long tranquil volcano suddenly erupted, and the sounds of the explosions were heard 100 miles away. The dust and ashes discharged ascended to a height of 38,000 feet, while the mountain heaved and moaned without intermission. Little damage was done, apart from the destruction of the island's vegetation, until August 26 and 27, when a terrible disaster occurred. The uproar far surpassed the sounds of the heaviest artillery hitherto discharged in warfare or the loudest thunderclaps, while a dense Egyptian darkness shrouded the surrounding country. The island's northern area was blown to fragments, and what was dry land was replaced by water 90, and in one instance, 164 fathoms deep. Elsewhere, the sea-bed was elevated, and two new islands arose from the scoriae discharged during the eruption, which have since been submerged by the tidal waves.

The raising of the ocean bed apparently generated the immense seismic wave which inundated and destroyed all the coast towns and village communities of the Sunda Straits. The distance travelled by this stupendous wave is astounding. In his *Malaysia and the Pacific Archipelagoes*, Professor Keane intimates that: "It was felt not only in South Africa distant some 5,000 miles from the scene of the eruption, but also at Cape Horn (7,500 miles) and possibly in the English Channel (11,000 miles). In Ceylon even the smaller waves were distinctly recorded. To the north the numberless islands of the archipelago soon destroyed it, but to the south-east the tide gauges of West Australia showed marked evidences of its having reached those shores."

Even more amazing were the atmospheric waves initiated by the stupendous explosions. These carried the dust emitted to extraordinary heights, and the magnitude of the disturbance might appear incredible were it not attested by the barograms of the world's leading meteorological stations. For the air waves traversed the complete surface of the globe until they arrived at the antipodes of their place of origin at Kra-

katau, when the larger and more powerful wave spread backwards to the scene of the disturbance and thus the propagation of this atmospheric current "was observed no fewer than seven times—four passages having been those of the wave travelling from Krakatau, and three those of the waves travelling from its antipodes."

The dust particles dispersed by this tremendous eruption remained suspended in the earth's atmosphere for some years. To such an altitude did they ascend that the late Sir Robert Ball in his *Earth's Beginnings* conjectured that from the enormous velocity of the dust particles driven into the upper atmosphere, that region must experience air currents far exceeding those occurring on our planet's surface. Moreover, the dust-laden lower levels of the atmosphere occasioned sunsets and afterglows of gorgeousness and beauty so wonderful for three or more years that Oscar Wilde suggested that the English sunsets were beginning to imitate the paintings of Turner. It was in November, 1883 that the sunglows in Britain were most superbly magnificent in their colouring.

The vast distances at which the noises of the eruption were heard transcend all previous or subsequent experiences. At Rodriguez in the Indian Ocean, nearly 3,000 miles from Krakatau as the crow flies, the sound of the explosion was distinctly heard, while in the opposite direction it carried to New Guinea more than 2,000 miles away. It seems strange, however, that in places comparatively near no sounds were noticed after the tremendous explosion of August 27. Still, similar anomalies were recorded during the World War at the time of the Silvertown explosion, for while the sounds were recorded in distant Midland centres, they were scarcely perceptible in places much nearer the scene of the disaster.

After the eruption was over the ejected pumice lay so deep in the Straits of Sunda, that it imperilled a large vessel passing through the waters. But the deposit soon drifted across the Indian Ocean and reached Natal in the following year. And, when, three seasons later, Dr. Treub, the botanist, visited Krakatau, he found the remaining pumice and other refuse already mantled with freshwater algae of several species, while he gathered eleven varieties of ferns and a score of other floral forms. Thus quickly does Mother Nature repair her ravages, although she offers no compensation to the living creatures she has slain.

T. F. PALMER

Can Mind be Explained?

A WIDELY held religious argument is that in the human mind we are confronted with a phenomenon which escapes a purely scientific account, and which therefore may be adduced in evidence of a "higher order" of activity, pointing, of course, to God.

The study of the mind, however, is to-day, as Julian Huxley says, putting the final storey on the great edifice of naturalism, as against supernaturalism.

But the edifice is not complete, and so I use as title, *Can mind be explained?* and not, *Has mind been explained?* It would be extremely premature to suggest that at this stage of our knowledge science can render a complete account of the workings of the human mind, however far it has advanced in its knowledge of the animal mind. Yet much is known of the animal mind, and a great deal, too, of the human infant. Nor are we in the dark as to many aspects of adult behaviour. And these facts create a strong presumption for the view that further advances will sooner or later conform to the same methods of investigation. This conclusion is strengthened by the re-

flection that there has never appeared any working alternative to the materialist way of investigation. So that, regardless of the future of science, it is legitimate to build on its past.

What do we mean by "mind," and what is meant by "explain"? First, we only know a thing by what it does, or how it behaves. What *does* nothing is nothing. Complete inactivity, absolute ineffectiveness, is unimaginable. A pebble lying unobtrusively in some forgotten crevice for years would appear to be doing nothing. Yet it offers its tiny quota of resistance to air currents, fills a track in space-time, emits certain wavelike modes of energy which, should they happen to cross the path of an organism with vision, set up appearances of the stone. And internally the pebble itself is a maze of electrical energy. We cannot ascertain the existence of something that does nothing. To be is to do. Every noun has its verb, and only through the verb can we know the noun, which is really a shorthand abstraction from a number of verbs.

What does mind do? Our knowledge of the mind is precisely our knowledge of conscious behaviour in all its forms. When we have studied and explained conscious behaviour, we have studied and explained mind.

Why do we say *conscious* behaviour? All behaviour is not conscious, e.g., mouth-watering, breathing, blinking, blood-circulating, etc. Some of these, especially hiccoughing, may *obtrude* on our consciousness, many of them may be arrested or altered or accelerated consciously. But we don't do them *because* we are conscious. We should do them just the same if we were not. This has been proved, for instance, by decapitating such a complex animal as the frog, from which a remarkable range of reflex responses can be elicited. We should be surprised to learn how much of our apparently conscious behaviour borders on the reflex.

Much, of course, borders on the unconscious, but that is not the same as reflex. The unconscious presupposes the conscious, which it imitates unawares. Unconscious behaviour follows no simple reflex path, but a track laid down previously in consciousness, and remembered. If then, I distinguish between the conscious and the reflex, it will be understood that the unconscious (or subconscious) is to be subsumed under the conscious. This is not to say, of course, that the unconscious is immune from reflex action, any more than the conscious.

What, then, is the difference between conscious and reflex behaviour and how shall we explain that difference? If we approach a cut juicy lemon our mouth secretes saliva. Over this we have had no control; it was reflex behaviour. Next, we eat the lemon. Over this we exercised a choice, and displayed conscious control. Has this conscious control a material basis, or is it the prerogative of something called Soul? It has a material basis, namely, the cortical cells of the brain.

No brain is needed to make saliva appear, as has been shown in the dog. The difference between the decapitated and the intact animal is that the addition of the brain gives the latter a more complicated range of behaviour—conscious behaviour. Does this mean that the brain houses a Soul or Ego which gives orders? No, it simply means that the nervous impulse has more paths along which to travel, which complicates the responses.

Whereas the spinal animal merely secreted saliva, the intact animal will eat the food and look round for more. Again, the head has three great receptor organs (eye, ear and nose), and the brain receives the nerves which bring in their impulses. Further, the development of the forebrain adds a store of remem-

bered experiences, facilitating memory, and, through that, a new quality of "awareness."

Conscious control, then, is a cerebral function, and the kind of behaviour it conditions is conscious behaviour. When we take a bite at the apple, that is a piece of behaviour, of whose history cerebral activity is an essential part. Without disturbances in the cortex it would not happen. The bite at the apple is the termination of impulses which are at one stage of their history cerebral, and the term "conscious" becomes thus enfranchised. It is the type of behaviour we call mind.

G. H. TAYLOR

(To be concluded)

Aimee at Los Angeles

A FRIEND asked me how I intended spending my evening. I smiled; then he smiled when I told him I was going to see Aimee McPherson and enjoy the show.

At the entrance I was, for a moment, taken aback by a man thrusting his hand toward me. I was about to say "how much"—when looking at him, I observed his kind face on which rested a gentle smile. "Welcome Brother," he said, as he quietly shook my hand. My light-heartedness was clouded; if I came for fun, I must seek it elsewhere. I passed into the Temple—took a seat—looked, saw and listened. My senses had plenty to do. It was dark, but the stage was flooded with light.

A young man was standing there and, through a microphone, was denouncing, with suitable gestures, the wickedness that exists, and what the Four Square Gospel was doing to stamp it out. Every few moments he would begin to sing a hymn, clapping his hands the while; the audience would take up the refrain and also clap their hands.

He asked them questions and they would answer "yes" or "no," as was expected of them. He asked all who supported him to signify in the usual manner, and up went a sea of arms.

Now and again he would say: "Praise be to God," and they would echo the phrase. Even his feelings were reflected in them; if he was angry, they were angry; if he was jubilant, so were they.

But I had come to see Aimee. Ah! There she was on the stage. She was seated on a throne-like chair, which had a high straight back and came to a point at the top; it was of dark, ornately carved wood, and was upholstered in red plush. Over the stage, an immense cross hung, and a figure in stained glass of the Lord in a familiar biblical setting was illuminated from behind. Behind me a woman's voice, every little while, would say in an undertone, "Praise the Lord," "Praise God." On some pretence, I turned to look at her. She was quite young, in black, and with the pallor and sadness of so many who "have religion." The speaker had finished now.

The lights went up, and I had a chance to look about me. The Temple is round, and has a gallery. From the walls of the pit and gallery, more than two hundred pennants are hung; on them are the names of various towns and States of the U.S.A. They are in red, white and blue. Girls in white sat in a raised enclosure at one side of the amphitheatre, and at the other side, in a similar pen, were a number of young men, who wore brightly coloured caps. The Temple was almost full, and I was told there were over 4,000 people present.

The lights went out in the body of the hall as Aimee got up. Tall, erect, and of imposing figure and carriage, she walked slowly and purposefully towards the "mike." She began. There is no appeal in her

voice, and it cracks now and again. She tells the congregation to turn around—shake hands, and wish each other a "Happy New Year." Before I know what it is all about, a young man—undersized and with the face of a child—holds out his hand and says: "A Happy New Year, brother." He is so sincere about it that I heartily wish him the same.

Aimee talked. Every once in a while she, too, would ask the audience something, to which they gave the appropriate reply. She said "The Lord be praised!" without emotion or fervour, it seemed to me, but her followers supplied all that.

I came to be amused and have some fun; I stayed to become utterly sad and dejected. The blind, unquestioning trust of these poor hard-working people, their exultation, their spiritual rejoicing, their eagerness to please the Lord by doing all that Aimee and her assistants told them to do, their obedience to the continued requests to raise their arms, to shout, that child-like young man's heart-felt handshake—I wondered at it all.

How can this woman, so obviously worldly, inspire people as she does "Suffer little children to come unto me." This passed through my mind as I gazed on the animated scene.

Aimee was in a long white robe on which was embroidered an out-size in crosses of white shining metal. Over her robe she wore a black cloak, the folds of which spread out like wings as she raised her arms; altogether an impressive sight. As soon as she had finished speaking she walked with measured step back to her throne. The curtain at the back of the stage went up and a choir of girls and youths began to sing to the accompaniment of the orchestra. That over, Aimee got up, thanked them, "praised the Lord" again. The audience echoed her praises. And so it went on. The interest of the flock was never allowed to flag for a moment. Turn followed turn, in quick succession.

I thought of Aimee and her power. Not by one word or action did she draw upon her emotions. Yet her dominance was clearly evident. If she only let herself go! Phew! She could make the sparks fly all right! (Pardon me! An ill-timed lapse from the straight and narrow path!)

I went out into the corridor. Here, with concealed lights shining on it, was a picture in vivid colours, of the "Crucifixion." The paragraph underneath advises the spectator to note the sodden face of the Executioner. There is "The Last Supper," also in colours, with Judas holding a bag of gold; a light-house—a boat for two named "Faith," and numerous other symbols. But here in the corridor it is all tawdry and unkempt. The tinsel and glitter of the Temple is for the Theatre part of it—for Aimee, her aides and her followers.

The fervour of these four thousand people is all-consuming! they are inspired, they repose their trust in God. The soul—the "hereafter"—these are not myths; they are real to these men and women who would gladly die for their beliefs.

As I passed by the Temple the following night, I noticed a huge sign announcing a Debate and Battle—Aimee *versus* someone who asserts that there is no God.

She'll pack them in again!

I visited the Temple another night.

It was an off-night and the meeting was held in one of the smaller rooms and was, to me, uninteresting. But an incident compelled my attention.

An elderly woman had apparently had a stroke. She was being carried out. She was a big woman.

They placed her on a bench and she was surrounded by five or six of her children.

They were exhorting her in a mad frenzy to praise the Lord.

There was this poor woman frothing at the mouth trying to shape the words.

There in a stuffy dismal corridor men and women were trying to force this poor delirious mother to mouth praises to their Lord.

Oh! it was awful.

JAMES CAIRN

Acid Drops

Sir Samuel Hoare has not quite closed the door to a public enquiry concerning the conduct of the police at a demonstration in London on January 31. We hope the matter will not be allowed to drop. We have had the word of some who were not concerned with the procession, and on whose statements we feel we can rely. Medical evidence of injuries is forthcoming, and also a great deal of evidence as to the unprovoked attack on individuals made by the police. The mere fact that these complaints of police brutality nearly always occur in connexion with demonstrations against the Government is enough to make one suspicious.

Those who wish to know the gravity of the charges should read the official report of the Parliamentary proceedings for February 13. This can be bought for sixpence, and it will enable anyone to see how strong the case is for an enquiry. Sir Samuel Hoare's fencing with the real issue was worthy only of a very cheap attorney. Sir Samuel said that no complaint has been made against individual policemen. We are assured by those who watched the disturbance that the actual numbers of policemen have been taken, and we should like to see an action raised in these cases. And when Sir Samuel says that he is convinced that the police acted with studied restraint, he is indulging in sheer impertinence. It is about time that this game of Cabinet Ministers, from the Prime Minister downward, citing official testimony as a decisive reply to charges against officials, was ended. A House of Commons with self-respect would have ended it long since. However, Sir Samuel has not quite closed the door to an official enquiry, and we hope the matter will be pressed.

Some years ago we pointed out that there was a distinct move to separate the Metropolitan Police from the people of London. The two have been traditionally on good terms, and while we had years ago much experience of the police, in connexion with open-air meetings—we seldom had any serious fault to find. And the behaviour of the police in the General Strike was a very powerful contribution to the good behaviour and good-temper with which that strike was conducted. But other people had also learned the lesson of that strike, and ever since endeavours have been made to separate the police from the public, even in matters of sport. A police-force that is on neighbourly terms with the public is one thing, but a police-force that is trained and educated to consider itself apart from, and even superior to, the general public is a danger to our ever achieving a real democracy.

The Bishop of London, who is retiring in September next is entitled to take £3,000 a year as pension from the salary he now receives. He has announced that he will take only £1,000, but as he also enjoys, in addition to the salary as Bishop, the rent of London House, St. James Square, which is said to amount to about £2,000 annually, he will still have enough to keep the wolf from the door. Nor will he need to issue a repetition of his famous balance sheet, issued some years ago, in which he showed that after he had paid his expenses—and for his clothing, taxes, holidays, books, etc., he had only a very modest competence left.

Mr. Douglas Jerrold writes in the *Catholic Herald* that:—

If we are to save democracy we must, as Christians, insist always on the necessity of using the democratic means to achieve Christian ends. The objection to totalitarianism is that a man under a tyranny cannot call his soul his own. The Pope alone is infallible. Popular majorities are at least as fallible as dictators.

We do not think that Mr. Jerrold would dare to write such absolute nonsense in any but a Roman Catholic paper. But he must be running some risk with even that kind of audience. To begin with Mr. Jerrold's sole interest in democracy is obviously that it will serve the purpose. That enables us to understand the kind of support given by the Roman Church to reformers in Spain. But what the democracy needs, apparently, is an infallible head, and that is where the Pope comes in—and democracy goes out. But popular majorities are infallible, yet, when the democratic majority accept the Pope as infallible, the democracy becomes infallible in its decisions. One wonders whether Mr. Jerrold is so great a fool as this kind of writing would indicate. Perhaps a flash of honesty comes out in the sentence that Roman Catholics must use democracy to achieve Christian (Catholic) ends. Jerrold was off his guard for a moment. Perhaps, writing for Roman Catholic readers, he did not think caution was necessary.

From the *Evening Standard*:—

An important laboratory in the south of England has recently added two refugee scientists, Dr. A. and Dr. B., to its staff.

A few days ago a friend of mine visited the director of the laboratory. He noticed on the walls of the room a number of portraits of benefactors of the laboratory.

Among them, rather incongruously it seemed, was Herr Hitler. The director was asked what the Fuehrer had done to earn this honour.

"Well," he said, "without Herr Hitler we should never have had the invaluable services of Dr. A. and Dr. B."

The friends of Lord Londonderry and Mosley are fast reducing the German population to a collection of gangster nit-wits.

There are over two million registered unemployed in this country. At least that is the number officially given. But the Minister of Labour is indignant that anyone should accept his own official figures. For, Mr. Brown has explained that there cannot be two million out of employment, because some of the two million get work, while others take their place. And as it is not the same two million all the time therefore there cannot be two million out of work. We think we see the answer to the conundrum. It is something like this. If at any moment during the day there are 250 people on London Bridge, inasmuch as it is not the same 250 all day, therefore there is no one at all on London Bridge. Ergo, unemployment is a myth. After that Mr. Chamberlain's explanation of the way in which he saved Czechoslovakia and checked Italy and Germany in Spain, and "appeased" the dictators, gives no ground for wonder.

And one thing emerges which makes the future of this country look very hopeful. A country that can withstand a succession of Prime Ministers such as Ramsay MacDonald, Mr. Baldwin and Neville Chamberlain is proving itself indestructible.

The *Observer* has reprinted a pious poem—or prayer—which appeared in the *Staffordshire Advertiser* of March 16, 1866. It aptly expresses all the fundamentals of what is still the creed of the vast majority of Christians. Some Christians would shudder at the crude candour of such lines, while retaining all that is involved as the essence of their Faith:—

A Plague is raging in the land
And smiting down our flocks and herds;
We come to pray: Lord stay Thy hand;
Let us not offer empty words.

In Jesu's name Who shed His Blood,
Atonement for our sins to make,
We come to plead with Thee—our God—
O Hear and Answer for His Sake.

O cause our Hearts to feel and know
How truly we deserve Thy rod,
Humble our pride and lay us low
And show Thyself a GRACIOUS GOD.

Lord, take Thy dreadful plague away,
Our cattle soon to health restore,
THEN will we praise Thee day by day
And all Thy attributes adore.

We can understand the common-sense of educated Christians revolting from absurd doctrines—even if they were dictated by the Founder and Author of their faith. The Rev. Frank Fairfax writes in the *Methodist Recorder* :—

The thorough-going pacifist says: "Let all these things happen, we will not take up arms." In other words let the Japanese do to our English cities what they have done in China. Let them do to our women what they did in Nanking. No, the pacifist who begins to see the stark realities of our world recoils from that.

It is awkward certainly, but "the thorough-going" Christian is in the habit of boasting the "Sermon on the Mount Ethical Code," which says, "Resist not Evil." The unfortunate fact is that Ye cannot serve Jesus Christ AND commonsense—you must choose between them.

The London bus incident recorded in a recent *Freethinker* may be paralleled by a New York remark. In Brooklyn recently a mysterious noise was heard late one night. Nobody yet has found the origin. Here is what the *New Yorker* suggests might have been the cause :—

There were many rumours. It was an earthquake (Long Island slipping back under the sea); it was the Brooklyn Edison Company (conceivably engineering a merger); it was the mutter of the aurora borealis, or a tidal wave, or, according to a radio man, just "an oblate ellipsoidal sound shell, formed by colder temperatures in the higher atmosphere." None of these explanations stood up under investigation and the mystery, as we write, remains in pure form, with one man's guess as good as the next. We approve of this, having an old-fashioned taste for miracles and a passion for *not* having everything explained in a reasonable and orderly manner. The sound you heard that night, ladies and gentlemen, may have been the rumble of jaggernaut or the drums of jeopardy. Or it may just have been God clearing his throat.

In an Obituary Notice in the *Listener*, there is this phrase marking the appreciation of the Editor for the truly religious man he was eulogizing: "He put God first: Not the State." Without the least little bit of Totalitarianism we fail to see any merit in this order. To the extent of its Democratic practice a State is what its citizens make it, and within its proper sphere (which does NOT include interference with freedom of speech) it should be obeyed subject to our right to replace it. What does "God First" mean? It does not and cannot mean anything but "Priestcraft First." There is nothing quite so undemocratic as what is called "God" in human government. At its best it means a government by good priests; but we have never experienced THAT sort of priestly rule. Giving power to "God" has always proved a relentless war on humanity.

The Student Christian movement has with some other similar bodies organized a universal day of Prayer for intercession on behalf of young Christians who are suffering for their faith. We do not know any place where young Christians are suffering for their faith, if one puts aside Germany, but we do know of places where they are apt to make others suffer because these are not believers in the faith. But why call this universal prayer an act of intercession? It looks like calling God's attention to a neglected duty. And what if God replies by taking up the Chamberlain attitude and denying that he has any official knowledge concerning what is going on unless the people concerned

inform him? After all if God were to enquire of Hitler whether he is persecuting Christians he would reply that nothing of the kind is going on. That is, assuming that God is acquainted with modern parliamentary practice.

The Bishop of Exeter so loves his brother Christians—on the other side of the episcopal street—that he thinks exchanging pulpits is a disservice to the Church—his Church. It is all right for a Nonconformist to mount an episcopal pulpit and talk at large about Christian love, but if he bears "Methodist witness" he may actually seduce members away from the Church. Which all amounts to stating the fact that Christians can agree together so long as they wander about in a maze of words that may mean anything, everything or nothing. But let any Christian say something definite, and other Christians are immediately out for his scalp.

The Bishop of Oxford has managed to get some £60,000 towards £80,000 for building new schools. But one must not imagine for a moment that building these schools indicates a passion for education as such. It does not. If the Church do not build these schools, where they are necessary, local governing bodies will. And the schools will be better staffed, better managed, and possess a higher standard of education. But the Government will give 75 per cent of the cost of these schools built by the Church, and hand over their control to a body of parsons whose real aim is not the education of the children, but the desire to see they are educated so they will grow up faithful members of the flock, sheep ready to be sheared when their "wool" is worth the clipping.

The Archbishop of York has written a book on the *Gospel of John*. We are not surprised to learn that he believes in its absolute truth, although we suspect that some other Christians would not agree with the Archbishop's conception of its "truth." He believes that the discourses placed in the mouth of Jesus are "substantially accurate," that is, if you agree with the Archbishop as to what they mean "substantially," then it doesn't matter how the discourses are worded. What a pity it is that the Holy Ghost was so poor a journalist that he could only get his message through "substantially" accurate, instead of getting it so clear that there could be no mistake about it.

One hundred and fifty attendants at a religious conference voted in favour of more and longer religious broadcasts. We are not surprised. If a conference of brewers were called upon to do so they would advocate the B.B.C. using the slogan "Drink more beer." But brewers have not the historic reputation for impudence that belongs to the religious part of the world. From the outset the B.B.C. has been for the general public a very expensive advertising agency of the Christian religion, and it still remains that.

Fifty Years Ago

PAUL who said Wives, obey your husbands, said also Slaves obey your masters. The time is approaching when the one conjunction will be no more heeded than the other. That his doctrine virtually meant the slavery of women is evident from Eph. v. 22, where he says, "Wives submit yourselves unto your husbands as unto the Lord." That is to say the submission must be unquestioning and complete. "For," he says, "the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is head of the Church. . . . Therefore, as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their husbands in everything." And again he says, "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection." Who can doubt that this most immoral teaching, which is inculcated upon every boy and girl from their school-days, is the fruitful cause of unhappy unions. A self-respecting woman before placing her life within the power of any man might reasonably demand that he repudiate the despotic doctrine of Saint Paul.

THE FREETHINKER

FOUNDED BY G. W. FOOTE

61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4

Telephone No.: CENTRAL 2412.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

- D. HART.—We know nothing whatever about the creation of something out of nothing. You had better apply to the Roman Catholic Church for information. It is a speciality with that body. The nearest one can get to producing something out of nothing is the money that has been made by the clergy explaining "God."
- J. B. JAMES.—We don't see how and where the matter of Freethought arises in connexion with Trades Unionism, as such. Man's freedom of thought should be without limits. His freedom of action must necessarily be expanded or limited as it tends to make human life better or worse.
- J. MCKENNA.—Emerods is the usual rendering. It is unlikely that the other disease was known at that date and in that part of the world.
- T. RICHARDS.—There are quite a number of "advanced" societies that are ready to avail themselves of the services of the *Freethinker* when they can be secured, but we do not notice any great willingness to reciprocate in kind. Reformers, real reformers, should be made of stronger stuff.
- C. COMPTON.—Sorry, but Mr. Cohen is really too busy, and too much in need of greater leisure than he has, to deal with philosophical difficulties in extenso by private letter—each of which would run to some length. There are limits to what he is able to undertake, although many of his correspondents pay him the compliment of assuming there are none.
- W. C. HALL.—If after twenty years your position remains where it was concerning a "supreme almighty power," it hardly seems likely that anything we can say in the twenty-first year will have much effect. At any rate we are not quite so certain as you are concerning "ultimate" anything. As we have explained the deepest we can get is experience, and the only way we have in making that experience intelligible and useful is by arranging it into categories. It is only a Theist who can talk so confidently of "Ultimate" substances. We are more modest.
- C. A. GREEN.—If you will only grasp the simple proposition that "freedom" does not with anyone who understands the word, imply an absence of causation your difficulties will disappear. Until this is done it is useless carrying the discussion further. Many Freethinkers have been altogether too ready to apply the Munich policy of appeasement, and in giving the indeterminist all for which he asked has given up the case for a scientific understanding of human conduct.
- C. EASTMAN.—What is the use of assuming an utterly impossible situation in order to consider what would happen if what could not happen occurs? Nothing is gained by creating a fog and then complaining that the air is not clear.
- W. W. SMITH AND J. H. BOWLES.—Thanks for addresses of likely new readers; paper being sent for four weeks.
- F. A. MARSHALL AND P. GOLDMAN.—Many thanks for notes of lecture.
- S. A. THOMPSON.—Pleased to know that you found our notes on the education of children so "timely and useful." The distinction between a Freethinker and an anti-Christian is always worth bearing in mind. And as we have so often pointed out, one does not get rid of the poison of religion merely by disowning specific doctrines. In many cases bigotry merely takes on a change of name.
- L. CORRINA.—We are sending on gramophone record. Our Finnish friends are free to make whatever use of it they can.

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

Sugar Plums

On Sunday next (March 5) Mr. Cohen will visit Leicester. This date is the anniversary of the opening of the Secular Hall, and there is usually a good gathering of those interested in the movement in Leicester and neighbourhood.

That organ of cheap appeals to the shallow-minded, the *Daily Express*, favoured its readers on February 20, with one of its seventy or eighty word leaderettes, on the incomes of the Universities and Public Schools. It pointed out that Oxford and Cambridge own much land, that they are exempt from taxation, and pay no death duties, as they live for ever. It says that last year Oxford was given by the taxpayer £137,000, and Cambridge £90,000, and adds, "This is the limit." It is quite a cheap way of going in for reform, as neither the *Express*, the Universities, or anyone else, expect that anything will be done or ought to be done.

We are not infatuated with the influence of the Public Schools or the Universities, and have said more than once that a man who can go through both with his intelligence unaffected and his character unworsened, must be a very strong personality indeed. But properly organized and constituted we should feel more inclined to increase their incomes than diminish them. If the *Express* can manage to think of anything beside "stunts," we suggest a direction in which it might do something. There are millions of money presented to the Churches, Chapels, and other places of worship, in the shape of remission of rates and taxes. If people consider the site values of the churches and chapels in any town or city with which they are acquainted, they will be able to form some idea of the colossal sum of money given by the State year after year. But to protest against this would not help the circulation of the *Express*. So it will continue to start one stunt after another so long as there are fools to be exploited.

The Liverpool Branch is holding its Sixth Annual Social Evening and Supper at the Royal Court Hotel, Queen's Square, on Saturday evening, March 4, 1939. Tickets, which are strictly limited in number, will be 2s. 6d. each, and the Branch will be glad to welcome members from outside Branches. Reception is at 7 p.m.

"Christianity and the Growth of Militarism" is the subject of Mr. R. H. Rosetti's lecture in the Bristol Street School, this evening (February 26) at 7 p.m. The local arrangements are in the hands of the Birmingham Branch N.S.S., and its energetic Secretary, Mr. C. H. Smith, is leading the Branch to increased strength. Freethinkers in the area are expected to help, and another full house should be the result to-night.

Mrs. Whitefield of Glasgow is paying a lecture visit to Birkenhead to-day (February 26). The lecture will be held at the Beechcroft Settlement, Whetstone Lane, and the chair will be taken at seven o'clock. We hope there will be a good attendance for the occasion.

One of our correspondents is anxious to secure a copy of the published debate between Bradlaugh and Mr. R. Roberts. Perhaps one of our readers may be able to oblige. Please send price, to this office.

The bound volume of the *Freethinker* for 1928 has now been despatched to those who ordered it. Will any subscriber who has not yet received his copy, kindly let us have notification of the fact.

Enoch and Jude

A STUDY IN CHRISTIAN VERACITY

Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying:—

Behold the Lord came with ten thousand of his holy ones, to exercise judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their works of ungodliness which they have ungodly wrought and of all the hard things which ungodly sinners have spoken against him. (*Jude* 14-16, R.V.)

FOR the present purpose it is needless to investigate the authenticity of the Epistle containing the above citation; and we shall, therefore, assume it as the work of a man named Jude, who was reputed to have been inspired by the Holy Spirit. Concerning Enoch, *Genesis* (v. 18-24) states that "Jared lived an hundred and sixty and two years and begat Enoch . . . and Enoch lived sixty and five years and begat Methuselah; and Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him."

The Reverend Professor R. H. Charles, M.A., DD., a great authority upon apocalyptic literature says:—

The Book of Enoch . . . is quoted as a genuine production in the Epistle of Jude (14 f.), and as Scripture in that of Barnabas (Ep. iv. 3; xvi. 5) . . . With the earlier Fathers and Apologists it had all the weight of a canonical book; but towards the close of the third and the beginning of the fourth century it began to be discredited, and finally it fell under the ban of the Church. (*Ency. Bib.* Vol. 1, Col. 220).

After the work had been lost for ages, Joseph Scaliger (1540-1609) discovered part of it. In his opinion—shared by Vossius, and other scholars—the author was a Jew, who wrote between the Babylonian Captivity and the birth of Christ. Further critics took it for the composition of a fanatic, who after the appearance of Christianity mingled Christian doctrines with other beliefs.¹ These damnatory views were finally confirmed, when, in 1774, James Bruce, the celebrated traveller, returning from Abyssinia, brought thence three fine Ethiopic copies of the Book of Enoch, presenting one to the Bibliothèque du Roi, Paris, and another to the Bodleian Library, Oxford. Of the last named, Dr. Laurence, Oxonian Professor of Hebrew, published in 1826 an English version entitled, "The Book of Enoch the Prophet, supposed for ages to be lost; translated by the Rev. Richard Laurence, LL.D., Archbishop of Cashel." The translator establishes the identity of the work with that cited by Jude and known unto the Fathers. The prophecies of Enoch, being the productions of a forger who assumed the name of the Patriarch, possess no authority, and should not be cited to prove anything save the mendacity of their fabricator.

The first person whom this inference brings into condemnation is Jude, *alias* Judas, one of the supposedly inspired authors who wrote the New Testament. He either knew or did not know that the alleged prophecies of Enoch were forgeries. On the first assumption, he was guilty of deliberate falsehood in ascribing them to Enoch, and in communicating them as truths; whilst on the second he is chargeable with historical inaccuracy, and erroneous teaching. Thus in either case it is quite impossible to suppose that his pen was guided by the God of Truth. The next persons condemnable in the case are those divines who since the time of Scaliger, and even that of better equipped critics, have not scrupled to quote the Epistle of Jude, and the prophecy of Enoch, as effusions derived from the Holy Spirit, or to use these worthless testimonials as themes for lengthy and per-

fervid annotations enforcing the tenets of Christianity. Here are some examples of this fraudulent conduct, and also of the contemptible practices employed to evade the points at issue. The clergy assume the right to dictate our faith and morals, and hence there can be no surer way of destroying this insolent and abominable claim than to show that the men who make it are in the habit of lying like Cretans to attain their ends.

Example I. William Burkitt (1650-1703), scholar of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, rector of Milden in Suffolk and vicar of Dedlam in Essex. His bulky work entitled "Expository Notes . . . on the New Testament" enjoyed immense popularity. The forty-first edition, which came out in 1809 at Liverpool, contains no allusion to the spuriousness of the prophecy attributed to Enoch, but, proceeding on the refuted assumption that the same was genuine, offers the following edifying remarks:—

Note 1. That the doctrine of the day of judgment is very ancient, foretold by the prophets from the beginning. . . . 2. How Enoch here prefixeth a note of incitement to his prophecy, *Behold the Lord cometh to judgment!* implying that great is our natural backwardness to believe and mind the coming of Christ to judgment. . . . 3. How royally attended Christ will come to judgment. *Behold he cometh with ten thousand of his saints.* . . . Observe, 4. The work of Christ at the day of judgment, namely, to convince and judge. . . . Observe 5. The persons whom Christ will convince and judge, the *ungodly.* . . . Observe, 6. That not only the deeds of ungodly men, but their words, and especially their *hard speeches* against God and his children, shall be brought into judgment.

Example II. Thomas Coke, LL.D., of Oxford University. This learned divine, one of the most illustrious men ever connected with Methodism in any of its numerous forms, became President of the Wesleyan Conference, and published in six large volumes exhaustive annotations upon the Holy Scriptures. He crossed the Atlantic eighteen times to carry the message of peace and salvation through the blood of the Lamb, and died at an advanced age on May 2, 1815, as he was passing once more over the watery deep. His "Commentary on the New Testament" appeared at London in 1803, more than two hundred years after the discovery of Scaliger, and nearly thirty years after that of Bruce; whence, if unacquainted with the ways of Christian divines, we should have expected to find him directing attention to the spurious character of the prophecy attributed to Enoch, and pointing out the fatal effect which this circumstance has upon the authority of Jude. Alas, however, for the simplicity of anyone capable of entertaining such groundless expectations. For Dr. Coke, whilst devoting eleven large pages to the Epistle of Jude, and copiously annotating the prophecy of Enoch therein cited, makes no reference whatever to the fictitiousness of the latter and the consequent fallibility of the former. On the contrary, he actually does not scruple to say as regards the alleged prophecy of Enoch:—

A remarkable fragment of antediluvian history is here preserved to us. Our translation has it, *Enoch*—prophesied of these. In the old English version it is *Enoch*—prophesied before of such. Blackwell takes notice that the words may be translated, *He prophesied against them*; but the [Greek] word, with a dative case after it signifies to prophesy to: so that the Syriae and others have well translated the words, *but Enoch prophesies also unto these men.* . . . Enoch prophesied that God would come, and with a flood, punish the impenitent with everlasting destruction. By a parity of reason St. Jude intimates that the wicked of his and of all ages may also expect to meet with the due reward of their deeds.

¹ *Ency. Brit.* 3rd. Ed., Edinburgh 1797. *Art.* Enoch.

This prophecy of Enoch is a remarkable testimony to a future state, given previous to the Mosaic economy.

It will have been observed that Dr. Thomas Coke was thoroughly acquainted with the technical exegesis of the passage in question; and hence, the omission before specified must have been due to design and not to ignorance.

Examples III. and IV. Barclay's *Universal English Dictionary*, and Cassell & Co., *Holy Bible with Explanatory Notes*.

In process of time the advance of knowledge concerning the Book of Enoch rendered the tactics of Burkitt and Coke of no avail. The abandonment of these, however, did not exhaust the resources of the Christian apologist. With a frank, if tardy, declaration of the apocryphal character of the prophecy attributed by Jude to Enoch, he sought to impress upon the unwary a sense of his candour and integrity, in order to win credit for his excuses on behalf of Jude. The two works above-mentioned will illustrate this method.

1. The *Complete and Universal Dictionary of the English Language*, by the Rev. James Barclay, improved and brought up to "the current year 1848," by B. B. Woodward, B.A., London, contributes the following information:—

Enoch, an ancient patriarch, of whom it is simply recorded in the Book of Genesis that he "walked with God, and was not, for God took him." A mention of certain prophecies by him in the Epistle of Jude, led to search for them, and three copies in the Ethiopic language were obtained by Bruce in his travels during the last century in Abyssinia. The passage in Jude occurs near the commencement of the book, which is made up almost wholly of preposterous figments related as visions; intended, however, to convey some sort of notion of the conflict of good and evil, and the ultimate victory of the good. It is evidently not much older than the Apostolic age, and its quotation by the Apostle Jude is no more testimony to its value than the quotations from Menander and Aratus, by Paul, are to them: the passage answered the immediate purposes of the writer; and no more need be asked.

Jude, or Judas, also called Thaddæus and Lebbaeus, was brother of James the Less, and was one of our Lord's apostles, but nothing is recorded concerning him in sacred history. A general epistle is ascribed to him, and appears to be genuine, although rejected by some from the first ages. It was written to expose and threaten the evil-livers, or heretics of the times, and has the same scope as some other of the general epistles, being particularly like the Second Epistle of Peter. The Apocryphal books called the *Ascension of Moses*, and the *Book of Enoch* are quoted in it: which has occasioned great trouble to some, who forget that quotation by a sacred writer does not change the original value of a writing, and that Paul has quoted a Greek comedian.

2. "The Holy Bible containing the Old and New Testaments, with Explanatory Notes, References, and a Condensed Concordance," a large and handsome volume, published in the last quarter of the last century, by Messrs. Cassell, Petter & Galpin, London, Paris, and New York, has the following note on *Jude*, verse 14:—

"Enoch also, the seventh from Adam," to distinguish him from Enoch the son of Cain. These words are quoted from an uncanonical book, a copy of which has been recently found in an Ethiopic version. Objections have been urged against the Epistle of Jude, because Jude, an inspired writer, has quoted from an uninspired work. The important question that concerned the apostle when penning the Epistle was—Is this a true statement? and being convinced of its accuracy, he quotes it, and thus vouches for its truthfulness without vouching for the accuracy of the work from which it was quoted.

St. Paul's Epistles are not lessened in authority by the Apostle's quotations from Greek poets: as, for example from Aratus (*Acts xvii. 28*); from Menander (*1 Cor. xv. 33*): and from Epimenides (*Titus i. 12*). The Apostles' remarks extend to the question, and not to the various books from which they are selected.

It is difficult to imagine anything more shameless than the line of argument taken by these writers.

The quotations which Paul is alleged to have made from Aratus, Menander, and Epimenides, are respectively: "For we are also his offspring"; "Evil company doth corrupt good manners"; and "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, idle gluttons."

These passages are obviously cited as statements embodying beliefs in harmony with those of the citator. Jude, however, not only accepts the declarations attributed to Enoch, but also asserts that Enoch actually made the declarations specified. If, therefore, this assertion be false, Jude must have been either a deceiving or a deceived person. But, when it is remembered that the prophesy which Jude affirms to have been uttered by Enoch, who lived before the Flood, was the work of a forger who lived after the Captivity, the falseness of the said ascription becomes plainly manifest, and Jude himself stands convicted either as a liar or as an ignoramus.

Again, as regards the quotations made respectively by Paul and Jude, those of Paul, being at least in two cases concerned with matters of human experience, do not depend alone upon the writers quoted; whereas, those of Jude, having relation, in each case, to things beyond human experience, do depend entirely upon the authorities alleged. These are the persons to whom we owe the apocryphal works entitled the *Ascension of Moses*, and the *Book of Enoch*. If, as W. Burkitt assumes, Jude referred the prophecy of Enoch to the advent of Christ in judgment at the end of time, it is clear that the Apostle attributed to the Patriarch the character of a real and credible Prophet; whilst, if, as Dr. Coke supposes, Jude assigned Enoch's forecast to the coming of God to punish the Antediluvians with a flood, thus prefiguring the coming of Christ to punish sinners at the end of time, it is equally evident that the Apostle sets forth the Patriarch as a seer whose predictions had been and would be verified by events.

Hence, in either case the object of Jude was not to clothe his own sentiments in the language of Enoch; but to make the authority of Enoch support, in some way or another, the doctrines propounded in his own Epistle.

C. CLAYTON DOVE

Flashbacks on Tyneside

(Continued from page 102)

MANY other interesting discussions appeared in the *Newcastle Weekly Chronicle*. Among those that I recollect were *Why People do not go to Church*, *Should Ministers of the Gospel be Paid?* *Sabbatarianism*, and *The Salvation Army and the Public*. The last-named controversy brought me into communication with Mr. John Manson, the author of a book of that title which, by the seriousness of its charges, coupled with the completeness of its analysis and documentation, had alarmed even the religious world. Up to the time of Mr. Manson's book, eulogy of the Army's work was the general rule, and this eulogy came at times from surprising quarters. But *The Salvation Army and the Public* changed all that. The leading newspapers and journals were almost unanimous in stating that the author had performed a useful public service. Even the religious journals were

dismayed. The *Methodist Times* described his book as "a bolt from the blue." The *Methodist Recorder* wrote "This book has left us feeling very unhappy about General Booth and his Army," and the *Church Times* said "There may be a good answer forthcoming; we shall hope to see it." No answer was forthcoming; there was not even a reply. The chapters in the book dealing with the finance of the Army were devastating. Mr. Manson was good enough to speak well of my share in advertising his facts in the *Chronicle* discussion, but, naturally, all the readers of that paper did not think the same. It was evident the Editor knew a good thing when he saw one, or he would never have ended the correspondence with the following note, a note containing such an extraordinary array of mixed metaphors as almost to provide a case for "Inspiration."

When a question like this does come before the public, I am not surprised when it meets with contagious and contaminating "Microbes" crouching about in human form like wolves in sheep's clothing, who inherently possess the same spirit and disposition as their old father that goeth about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.

I am, etc.,

ANTI-INFIDEL.

The *Salvation Army and the Public* was almost too successful. If it had contained a few loose statements and a few figures that didn't add up correctly, it would have brought about a sensation. But from it does date the Army's decline in popularity. The same gush about the Army's "good work" is occasionally heard, but indiscriminate praise in those days was almost universal. One often wonders to what extent, if at all, the Salvation Army put its house in order after Manson's exposure. The probability is that some of the more glaring scandals were modified, but on these matters it is extremely hard to gain reliable information.

The controversy on *Sunday Observance* led to the forming of a Sunday Music Society in Newcastle, with its immediate practical object of having Music in the Public Parks on Sunday in Newcastle. A generation before Elijah Copland had instituted a Society with the same object, and had put up a gallant but unsuccessful fight. In 1906 we re-formed it under the name of the Newcastle-on-Tyne Sunday Music Society. From the first Minute Book now lying before me, I find that those who attended the first meeting were Nicholas Temperley, Alfred Howson, J. McIntee, M. Sankey, W. Overy, W. Wright, J. Brodie, Elijah Copland, J. Pearson, L. Grey, J. G. Bartram, H. Talbot, J. Easton, J. H. Cresswell, F. Cresswell, G. Cresswell, J. Dickinson, J. Bell, M. J. Charter, A. L. Coates, A. Gibson, and J. Hewitson.

As Secretary of the Society I remember forming one of an "influential deputation" which waited upon the City Council on this question of Sunday Music in the Parks. Ralph Young was our spokesman in the gilded chamber, and amongst others attending were Hugh Boyle, President of the Northumberland Miners' Association; Mr. T. Wilkinson, Secretary of the Trades Council; and Mr. J. N. Bell, Secretary National Union of Labour. The Sunday Lecture Society were represented by N. Temperley, E. T. Nisbet, R. S. Nisbet, A. Howson and J. McIntee, all well-known and respected business men of the town. It was an imposing deputation, but the Town Councillors by a majority proved themselves just as imposing—if a play on words is permissible. They devised a scheme to shelve the issue by sending (for two or three weeks at the most) bands on Sundays into the "slums," just to prove that they were not biased, and that their hearts, at any rate, were in the right places.

Our Members fought a bye-election in one of the wards on the Sunday Music issue and won handsomely. We also retaliated by holding musical concerts on the Town Moor. The Secretary of the Committee of Freeman would not give his formal consent, but this did not deter us. The concerts went on just the same and the Freemen thought it wiser to take no action. Every Sunday we fixed a temporary platform removing it after the performance. I remember two of the Bands which obtained the Crystal Palace Blue Ribband and appearing for us there; those of Spencer's Steel Works and St. Hilda's Colliery. We failed, however, to attain our main end—the provision of Sunday Music in the Parks—in spite of much hard work, in which the Cresswells played the part of giants. On the Council at that time was Sir Wm. Haswell Stephenson. He was a prominent Nonconformist and a person of admittedly high civic virtues, but, unfortunately, Sabbatarianism possessed him very completely. He used to subject all his colleagues to a very close and persuasive personal canvass on this question when necessary and his zeal was effective. Many of our friends on the Council held the opinion that, as long as Sir William was on the Council, Sunday Music in the Parks had not a dog's chance. Well, the toll of nature has removed him, and still there is no Sunday Music in the Parks of Newcastle. Here the fact should be stated that the Sunday Lecture Society found all the funds for the Sunday Music agitation. They were glad to supply them. They always enjoyed a large cash balance which their constitution prevented them from spending, save on objects similar to those of their own, although the Committee-men did voluntarily all the work. Even an Annual Dinner for the Committee and friends had always to be self-supporting. And their help was not only money; it was of all kinds. Their officers were men actuated by principle and were of ripe experience. They were capable of both wise counsel and, when the occasion called for it, courageous action.

In 1901, the Branch commenced the holding of regular Thursday meetings under the name of "The Newcastle Rationalist Debating Society." These provided an open platform and became a well-known feature of Novocastrian life. During the time I was in Newcastle over 250 lectures were given. Almost every controversial issue had its innings, and the so-called "crank" was occasionally welcomed on the chance of his cause being one of those in its "day of small things." On running over the names of those who appeared under our auspices, I notice that two of the present-day Members for Newcastle-on-Tyne subjected themselves to our scrutiny and criticism, and Councillors put in frequent appearances. The name of Councillor Frank Drummond appears on several occasions. Frank was a great friend of Bartram and did much pioneer work on Tyneside. Mr. Merritt, the present Secretary of the Branch, tells me that Drummond now lives in Toronto, and has reached the ripe age of 83. He still keeps in touch with the old country and is eager for news of all kinds, particularly of the causes he has had so long at heart. Perhaps he will be glad to know that there are still some alive who remember his unswerving and courageous work for unpopular causes, and who hope that he long continues to derive pleasure from his honourable memories.

T. H. ELSTON

(To be continued)

Judaism and Christianity will disappear. Jewish work will end, but Greek work—that is, science, rational and experimental civilization without charlatanry, without revelation, founded on reason and liberty—will, on the contrary, go on forever.—Revan.

Pragmatism and Materialism

(Concluded from page 126)

HERE it is of interest to find that after so much detail, but with little consideration, our Pragmatists find a value arising out of religious belief which follows, by way of implication, that no such values can be ascribed to a belief of "negation" or Materialism as such, and this again by the same and persuasive William James who, while observing that Pragmatism has no a priori prejudices against theology continues:—

If theological ideas prove to have a value for concrete life, they will be true, for Pragmatism, in the sense of being good for so much. For how much more they are true, will depend entirely on their relations to the *other truths* that also have to be acknowledged. *Pragmatism*, p. 73.

The values assigned to religious belief are then given, which consist of its optimism and the consolation of mind given to those who have embraced it:—

It may be accused of remoteness and sterility, but so far as it affords such comfort, it surely is not sterile; it has that amount of comfort. *Ibid*, p. 73.

This, of course, is accepted by our Pragmatists without any consideration of those *other truths*, namely, the value of religious belief from the standpoint of history and psychology, or the manner in which religious influences have played their part in the persecution of man. Prejudice and ignorance, the terms we use to cover all that is inimical to man, and which have been more closely allied with religion than with other matters, are entirely ignored, and thus, tacitly, we are given to understand that ignorance and prejudice are of no moment. And this in spite of the statement: "For how much more they are true will depend entirely on their relations to the other truths that also have to be acknowledged!"

With reference to Materialism this is dismissed as of no value, and with the same cursory examination applied as when dealing with religious belief. Here Pragmatic values become less concrete. As with religion Pragmatic values are given to the belief in a remote and illusory future, so must it inevitably pass censure upon a disbelief in this.

We now find that with those who embrace the doctrine of Materialism, pessimism is the one and only result, and this is shown by reference being made to the writings of Nietzsche, Thomson and others. Schiller tells us that *The City of Dreadful Night* must be taken as the most serious attempt yet made in stating the case of pessimism, and again refers to Thomson as a man who gave way to drink to drown his sorrows. It is, in his own words:—

A superb poetic statement of the case against optimism, as a poignant expression of the utter desolation of a soul that abandons itself to a belief in a godless, mindless, ruthless and mechanical universe. *Must Philosophers Disagree*, p. 148.

Also, in his book *The Will to Believe*, William James cites the same poem, and compares this with the optimism as sung by Walt Whitman.

To reply, there is no need to dwell upon the habits of Thomson, whatever these may have been, as it is not to the point in giving any estimation of values, for the value of Materialism is what may be described as the value of science or human effort directed towards the conditions and exigencies of this world. In other words Materialism, to those who understand, means the adoption of a principle by which alone are we enabled to create any real valuation upon things, and

therefore may be rightly described as the value of values. Its value is but a reflection of human thought and intelligence upon things which *matter*, and not upon illusions or beliefs that have no meaning for concrete life. So much for its value, overtly seen and proclaimed by the rational, that in its absence there would be no science as it does in fact represent all scientific procedure, or as all science is a representation of Materialism.

As Materialism means so much then its value cannot be disputed while dealing with facts. For it is here we are faced with a mere statement of opinion and one of fact. That some Materialists are pessimists is no answer to the value of Materialism, and neither does this convey any meaning from the standpoint of individual psychology, as obviously there are Materialists who are pessimists and others who are not, and we presume the same applies to those of religious belief.

But to add to their confusion even our Pragmatists agree that pessimism is more associated with those of religious cravings, as, on the subject of the Desire for Immortality, Mr. Schiller tells us that a Martian visiting this world would have to seek it:—

Not in the Churches or the Universities, and still less amid the bustle of active life, but in the asylums in which are secluded the unhappy victims of religious mania or melancholy. *Humanism*, p. 315.

Then again, upon this question of pessimism the issues become more and more confusing when we are told:—

That pessimism is essentially a certain definite attitude towards the great and well-recognized class of judgments which are known as judgments of value. *Ibid*, p. 160.

Or, in another way:—

. . . pessimism is always secondary and results from the breakdown of some optimistic scheme of value. *Ibid*, p. 164.

Thus we now arrive at the point of view that we are optimists before becoming pessimists, which makes us rather chary as to whether we shall be optimists in the sense of placing any valuation upon things! For to escape from this dilemma there is certainly no alternative but that of intellectual suicide. Rightly, however, it is fatuous to suggest that there is any choice in this matter, or that we can accept Pragmatism, Humanism,¹ or the Will to Believe as a policy of expediency to meet our needs.

Whatever values do exist, the truth remains that these vary from those which are highly practical to those which are not. And while there may be some agreement that the individual would derive a measure of satisfaction from religious emotionalism, it is manifest that both the individual, and Society, would derive greater benefit by giving practical attention to the affairs and problems of this world. For it is obvious that to society the things that matter are those which are real, and these are facts of environment with which we must deal, or to which we must adjust ourselves as best we may. To overcome obstacles or problems is precisely to make those adjustments to the benefit of man: It is what has been described as the law of adaptation, or what Spencer termed the law of Intelligence;² but that means, and can only mean, the adoption of method or conduct which at once admits the value of Materialism.

J. W. PORTER

¹ *Humanism*, another word for *Pragmatism*.

² See *Principles of Psychology*.

Correspondence

CHURCH BELLS

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER"

SIR,—I note with interest your remarks on p. 55 of the current issue of the *Freethinker* about the loud-speaker nuisance at Twickenham. I think the church bell nuisance is much greater than any effect produced by a loud-speaker, crashing and clanging as they do on several days a week (for practice!) as well as on a Sunday. Is there no method whereby this nuisance can be reduced or limited by law or public appeal? I think an article in the *Freethinker* on this subject would be welcomed by many.

C. H. BULMAN.

[We are afraid there is no remedy at law against the nuisance of Church Bells. Religion is a fully-licensed nuisance in this country.—ED.]

Obituary

MURRAY MARTIN

It is with feelings of the deepest regret that I have to record the death of Murray Martin at the age of 77. A life-long Atheist, Mr. Martin was firm in the expression of his convictions, and advancing years led to no weakening in his interest in the movement. He had served as President of the Glasgow Branch, and in spite of a weakening of sight, he kept in touch with affairs by a weekly reading to him of the *Freethinker*, a journal for which his appreciation was unbounded, as was also his admiration of its editor. A militant Freethinker all his life, almost his last words were, "Well, my friends, I have lived an Atheist and I die one."

At his request a Secular Service was read at the graveside in Riddrie Cemetery before a large assembly of mourners. The service was read by the President of the Branch, Mr. B. Hamilton, and there were many expressions of appreciation of the dignity and beauty of the address. Murray Martin's genial, uncomplaining, and generous personality made him a loved and respected figure with those who knew him. To his family we offer the most sincere sympathy, and hope that they, like ourselves, will find consoling memories in the thoughts of one who represented so high a type of character.—M.W.

Ogilvie Jamieson

By the passing of Ogilvie Jamieson, at the age of 79, the Greenock Branch has suffered a heavy loss.

One of the old brigade, he looked back with pride on the part he played in stormy Bradlaugh days, and on the fact that he, with a few kindred spirits, was responsible for meetings in Greenock, addressed by Messrs. Watts, Foote and Cohen.

On February 6, a most impressive Secular Burial Service was read at the graveside in Port Glasgow Cemetery by Mr. McCann, the Greenock President.

Mr. Jamieson leaves a widow and grown-up family, to whom we extend our deepest sympathy.—C.H.M.

National Secular Society

REPORT OF EXECUTIVE MEETING HELD FEBRUARY 16, 1939

IN the absence of the President, owing to a chill, Mr. H. R. Clifton was elected to the chair.

The following were also present: Messrs. Clifton, Hornibrook, Rosetti (A. C.), Elstob, Wood, Preece, Seibert, Ebury, Bedborough, Horowitz, Griffiths, Mrs. Quinnton, and the Secretary.

The meeting expressed its sympathy with the President, and wished him a speedy and complete recovery.

Minutes of the previous meeting were read and

accepted. The monthly Financial Statement was presented. New members were admitted to Edinburgh, Glasgow, Birmingham, Bradford, West Ham, West London Branches and the Parent Society. Lecture reports and correspondence from West Ham, Birmingham, Bradford, Edinburgh, Newcastle and Liverpool were dealt with. It was declared that the Annual Conference would be held in Bradford this year in accordance with the votes recorded by the Branches. On the report of the Annual Dinner there was unanimous agreement that the function was a well marked success. The date of the 1940 Dinner was provisionally fixed. A number of minor matters were dealt with, the next meeting of the Executive was fixed for Thursday, March 16, and the proceedings closed.

R. H. ROSETTI,

General Secretary.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES Etc

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

LONDON

OUTDOOR

KINGSTON BRANCH N.S.S. (Market Place): 7.30, A Lecture. Weather permitting.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (White Stone Pond): 11.30, Sunday, Mr. L. Ebury. Parliament Hill Fields, 3.30, Mr. L. Ebury.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 3.30, Sunday, Messrs. Bryant, Barnes, Collins, Tuson and Mrs. N. Buxton.

INDOOR

NORTH LONDON BRANCH (The Cricketers' Arms, Inverness Street, Camden Town, N.W.1): 7.30, Debate—"Is Theism Rational?" *Affir.*: Mr. B. Fuller. *Neg.*: Mr. L. Ebury.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Alexandra Hotel, South Side, Clapham Common, S.W.4): 7.30, Mr. A. Burall—"Pity the Poor Pacifist."

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1): 11.0, J. McCabe—"The Subtle Tyranny of the Press."

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (The Laurie Arms, Crawford Place, Edgware Road, W.): 7.30, Miss F. W. Stella-Brown—"Voluntary Parenthood."

COUNTRY

INDOOR

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N.S.S. (Bristol Street Schools): 7.0, Mr. R. H. Rosetti—"Christianity and the Growth of Militarism."

BIRKENHEAD (Wirral) BRANCH N.S.S. (Beechcroft Settlement, Whelstone Lane): 7.0, Mrs. M. Whitefield (Glasgow)—"What Freethought Means to Me."

BLACKBURN BRANCH N.S.S. (Jubilee Assembly Hall, Market Hall, Blackburn): 7.30, Monday, February 27, Mr. J. V. Shortt (Liverpool)—"Mind and Body." Literature for sale.

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

BRADFORD BRANCH N.S.S. (Laycock's Forum, Kirkgate): 7.15, Mr. G. Harrison (Mexborough)—"World Vision."

EAST LANCASHIRE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION (28 Bridge Street, Burnley): 2.30, Mr. J. Thompson—"More Unsolved Problems of Science."

EDINBURGH BRANCH N.S.S. (Free Gardeners' Hall, Picardy Place, Edinburgh): 7.0, Debate—"Dialectical Materialism." Con.: Mr. F. Smithies. Pro.: Mr. A. Senior.

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY (East Hall, McLellan Galleries, Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow): 7.0, Andrew Kent, M.A., Ph.D., F.C.S.—"Developments in Modern Science."

LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate): 6.30, Mr. T. H. Elstob—"And God Made Insects."

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N.S.S. (Transport Hall, Islington, Liverpool, entrance in Christian Street): 7.0, Mr. S. R. A. Ready—"If You Know What I Mean."

MANCHESTER BRANCH N.S.S. (King's Café, 64-66 Oxford Road, Manchester, near All Saints Church): 7.0, Mr. J. H. Black (Manchester)—"Christianity and Death."

MIDDLESBROUGH (Labour Hall): 7.0, Wednesday, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

STOCKTON (Jubilee Hall): 7.0, Sunday, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

TEES-SIDE BRANCH N.S.S. (Jubilee Hall, Leeds Street): 7.15, A Lecture.

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“Freethinker” Endowment Trust

THE *Freethinker* Endowment Trust was originally registered on August 5, 1925. Until that date the practice had been for many years to issue an annual appeal to make good the deficit on the issue of the paper. It was suggested by some of the constant subscribers that in order to do away with this annual appeal subscribers should capitalize their gifts and create a fund which would bring in an amount adequate to cover the inevitable deficit on a paper of this description. This was done, and a sum of £8,000 subscribed in a little over two years. When the two years losses had been made—the annual subscription was suspended during the raising of the £8,000—there was left a capital sum of just over £7,000 for investment. The income at an all round yield of five per cent did not meet the deficit, but we have managed to get along. Of late nearly half the invested capital has been repaid, and re-investment involved a loss of income. There has in addition been a rise in the cost of printing and also of wages.

By the terms of the Trust no Trustee may derive anything in the shape of payment, or emolument for services rendered, and in the event of the Trust being terminated as no longer necessary, the whole of the capital will be handed over to the National Secular Society for general propaganda purposes.

In these circumstances we beg again to bring the existence of the Trust before readers of the *Free-*

thinker. The Trust may be benefited by direct gifts of money, by the transfer of shares or by legacy.

It should be said that the *Freethinker* is, and always has been, an independent property. It is a private limited company with a purely nominal capital. It is able to avail itself of the income of the Endowment Trust only when an official accountant has certified the amount of the loss during the year, and then only to the extent of the loss. Unfortunately the income of the Trust does not meet the deficit.

There is no need to say very much here concerning the *Freethinker*, or its value to the Freethought Cause. It holds its own by comparison with any Freethought journal that has ever existed in this country or abroad. It is now in its fifty-eighth year of publication, and stands as high in the estimation of its readers as it has ever done.

The Registered offices of the *Freethinker* Endowment Trust is 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. Letters may be addressed to either the Secretary or to the Editor of the *Freethinker* at this address.

THOMAS PAINE

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